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ISSUE 127 MARCH 2010

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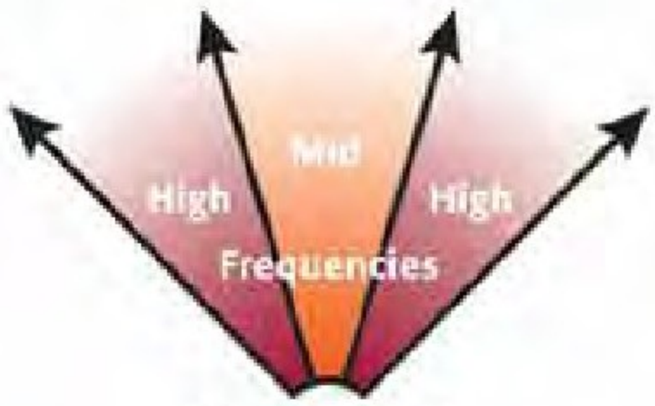
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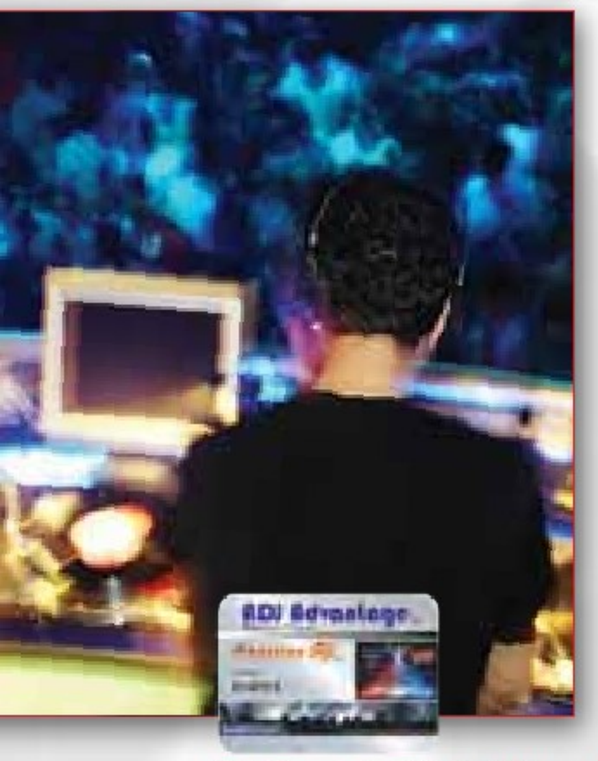




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Giving You What You Need

The magazine in your hand represents a new chapter in Mobile Beat history. You may have noticed that you didn't receive a separate Gear Book issue of the magazine last December. Instead, we provided a detailed preview of our Las Vegas trade show, full of articles by seminar presenters, as your bonus seventh issue of the year.

Yes, we did away with the old Gear Book and its pages of product lists, once and for all. We probably let it live a little too long; serious shoppers have been using the web as their primary search and info tool for quite a while now. We didn't miss that fact: A great place to start any search for DJ gear info and to find links directly to manufacturers and dealers is our online gear guide at http://mall.mobilebeat.com.

But we haven't thrown out the concept of providing essential info to help you get the best performance possible out of the gear you have. Previously, we included a few "how to" articles among the pages of equipment info in each Gear Book.

Now, we are committed to bringing you more of this kind of practical knowledge, concentrated in one issue every year (as well as in smaller doses in every issue throughout the year). We hope that this new concept—The Gear Book, Remixed—will better serve your needs as a performer who relies on equipment to support your entertainment endeavors. We know it will be a more interesting read—it certainly was for us as we put it together!

Along with a full load of other great articles on performing, music, business, marketing, motivation and more, we also include a report on our recent Las Vegas show, MBLVX. Most notable is the fact that, although for most, the economy has just begun to slowly turn around (no big bailouts for DJ companies!), attendance at our yearly Vegas event was barely down a blip. And, in fact, the level of excitement, the quality and quantity of seminars, and the selection of gear on hand was bigger than ever. While they were definitely having a lot of fun in Vegas, DJs at the show seemed focused even more than ever on finding real solutions to help them succeed.

MBLV continues to be the best yearly event for doing just that: getting what you need to succeed. If you missed this year's show, don't worry: You may be able to get a taste of the show experience at an MB Tour stop near you this summer. (Look for Tour info in the May issue.) Or, if you come to Vegas next February, we promise an extra special experience as we celebrate 20 years of Mobile Beat! Keep checking back at MobileBeat.com for updates this and all our trade events. And...See you at MBLV**XX**! MB

Dan Walsh, Editor-in-Chief

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K-NEWS FROM QSC

QSC Audio (www.qscaudio.com), has announced that it will be unveiling a groundbreaking new live sound system at the ProLight+Sound tradeshow Frankfurt,



Germany. At last year's expo, QSC Audio introduced the K Series line of active loudspeakers, and this year they will raise the bar further, launching the new KW Series.

The company's K-Series has also been honored by being recognized as one of MIX Magazine's Top 20 hits of NAMM 2010. After 30 years of reporting on new pro audio developments, the magazine's acknowledgment the more innovative products they've found is one of the greatest honors a manufacturer can receive. To check out the complete list of MIX Magazine's Top-20 hits of NAMM 2010, visit this link:

http://mixonline.com/news/winter-namm_2010_certifiedhits_0902/index2.html

ADJ SETS DJS DREAMING

DJs and weddings: They go together like, well, brides and grooms, or love and marriage. Most DJs have done a ton of weddings; and although DJs might not know the secret to matrimonial bliss, they do have some pretty good ideas about what goes into to making a really special, unforgettable nuptial ceremony. Now they have a chance to share their pearls of wedding wisdom with the world in the American DJ Dream Wedding Contest.

Entering is simple: Contest hopefuls just need to send in a video of no longer than 5 minutes in length, sharing the details of their dream wedding. What would the bride and groom be like? The guests? What food would they serve? Where would the wedding be set? What kind of music and dancing would be enjoyed? American DJ also wants to know how the DJ would use three of the newest ADJ lights to create a light show worthy of this dream wedding. The three lights are the Jellyfish, Profile Panel RGB and Revo Rave. More information on all three of these products is available on the American DJ website at www.americandj.com. Videos should be sent as video responses to DJ Brian Redd's "American DJ Dream Wedding Contest" video on his YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/user/briansredd) More information on how to enter the contest is available on the American DJ website

The key to this contest is for DJs to let their imaginations run wild, and share their best wedding vision to help fellow DJs know how American DJ's new state-of-the-art lights can take any party to new heights. Videos will be judged on the basis of creativity, fun, inspiration and all of the other cool stuff that makes people so happy to be part of the DJ world.

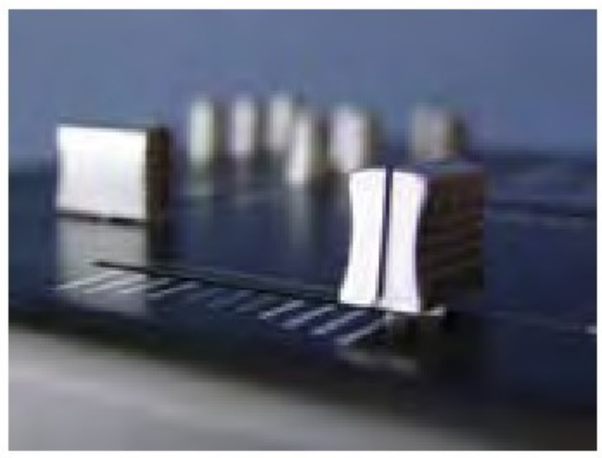
The prizes are as follows: Four winners will receive gear, plus 20 runners-up will receive a free custom banner from American DJ. American DJ's Choice Winner will receive two Jellyfish lighting effects plus 500 ADJ Advantage Points. Brian S. Redd's Choice Winner will receive two Profile Panel RGB lighting effects plus 500 ADJ Advantage Points. Viewer's Choice Winner will receive two Revo Rave lighting effects plus 500 ADJ Advantage Points. Grand Prize Winner will receive a Galaxian Royale laser effect, plus an additional lighting effect will be added for each 100 video submissions to the contest. The additional lighting effects will be determined by American DJ at the end of the contest. 20 runners-up will receive a custom DJ banner from American DJ. This will be a separate drawing. One submission per video will be randomly drawn to determine DJ banner winners.



GETTING THE POINT ACROSS ONLINE

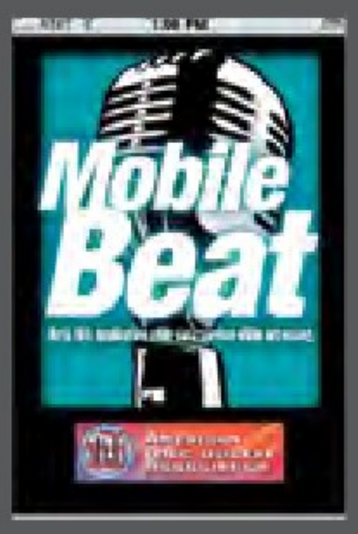
Mobile DJs around the globe are working to improve their bottom lines as revenue in many markets remain stale, and many entertainment professionals seek help through internet web sites that provide marketing strategies and advertising ideas to increase growth.

Mobile Beat and MobileBeat.com, a bi-monthly publication and leading website dedicated to the DJ industry has been a haven for mobile entertainers who have made their business more than just a hobby. With features like community forums, DJ University, professional business support, the latest articles, and the the largest DJ convention in the world, the name Mobile Beat is synonymous with professionalism. With the advent of more efficient video technology, Mobile Beat has joined forces with the new Crossfader Show to bring exclusive content to internet browsers everywhere. Each week, the Crossfader Show streams news, interviews and advice in a real-time interactive, topical talk show format.



With over twenty years of experience in the mobile entertainment field and a deep understanding of the DJ trade, the

TURN TO PAGE 56



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www.vocopro.com

A THRILLING QUEST

Your "quest" for the perfect LED lighting effect may have come to an end now that American DJ has unleashed its new LED Quest. Powered by a massive 15 watts of LED power, this easy-to-operate sound-active effect shoots out bright red, green and blue rotating beams from 19 lenses to cover an entire dance floor or other large area.

Containing 1 x 5W red LED, 1 x 5W green LED and 1 x 5W blue LED (15 watts total), the LED Quest projects saturated, brilliantly-colored beams that look great with or without fog. With its 130° beam angle and 19 lenses, a torrent of eye-popping beams move and rotate to the beat of the music. The beams' movements are quick and fluid, thanks to the unit's high-quality stepper motors. There's even a strobe effect to add pulsating excitement



Sound active programs make it easy to get the LED Quest up and running and a sensitivity knob on the rear panel lets you control its response to the music. You can even link multiple LED Quest units together in master/slave fashion via XLR cable for an instant, synchronized light show over a larger area.

The LED Quest comes with a hanging bracket and features multi-voltage operation (AC 100-240V, 50-60Hz). Lightweight (9 lbs.) and compact (18.25"L x 12.25"W x 12.25"H), it is ideal for mobile use as well as mounting in places where space is at a premium.

www.americandj.com

IT'S HOT—*AND* TASTY

CHAUVET lighting retail dealer and mobile DJ Pablo Elizondo figured out how to cash in on Texans' passion for barbecuing by making his own barbecue pit complete with trusses, lights, speakers, plasma TVs and a DJ stand.

Elizondo, who owns DJ Centro in Houston, explains: "My main concern is growing my business...We can rent it out for parties or do catering."

Pitmaker, a company located in suburban Houston, custom made the barbecue pit for Elizondo. The giant grill is actually a DJ stand, with the real grill on one side and a smoker on the other. CHAUVET lights including COLORdash Accent, COLORstrip Mini, and Q-Spot 150 LED all help to set the party mood. "We started out with a couple of moving heads, but we've added several more" says Elizondo.

And this unique entertainment setup is not lacking in the food preparation area either. A few weeks prior to this writing, Elizondo's pit took first place for showmanship at a Houston cook-off, while a Pitmaker executive won first place for best brisket using Elizondo's grill.



In February, CHAUVET caught up with Elizondo at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo 2010's World Championship BBQ Cook-Off, as part of the Pitmaker-sponsored entourage. This cook-off draws as many as 700 entrants and Elizondo hoped to be among the winners, but he wasn't doing the cooking.

"I'm not the best cook, but I'm around some of the best," he said. "I'm trying to build up my business by selling my product, CHAUVET, and trying to sell to another market. I never thought I would build something like this, I just came up with this idea and told Pitmaker what I wanted."

For more info on CHAUVET's large menu of tasty lighting devices, go to **www.chauvetlighting.com**. MB









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Chops

ADDING THAT "SOMETHING EXTRA" THAT SETS YOU APART

BY STU CHISHOLM •

In much of the discussion about how today's DJs can survive and even thrive in a down economy, most pundits advise us to focus on "what makes you unique." At first glance, this might seem like a "eureka!" moment, yet upon further reflection, exactly what is it that you think of as unique to yourself?

For instance, I've always been proud of my verbal and vocal abilities, and work hard to maintain a level of aptitude so that I can be ready for any situation, such as a call to do a voice-over job for a commercial project, or the narration for a local video production. Yet for all my work, I can name several people who, in my opinion, are better. They inspire me to up my game. They also illustrate that this attribute isn't truly "unique." No matter how great my voice or delivery might be, nobody will be interviewing me on Good Morning America because of it. Or, more realistically, hiring me over a good DJ charging far less cash for their performance.

UNIQUE SIMILARITIES

A comprehensive look at your business and, in particular, your performance, might reveal that there is nothing that you're doing that other DJs are not. Most of our "uniqueness" is wrapped up in putting our own spin on all of the traditional activities that mobile DJs have been doing since the dawn of the industry. A fun twist on the bouquet and garter toss, or a well-choreographed grand entrance are all good things, but none of that will ever put you in the "world class" category. That cool, new light that everyone is talking about will soon be in every DJs arsenal.

In our search for that "something extra," many of us have bought all the latest books and DVDs, such as Peter Merry's ***The Best Wedding Reception… EVER***, Scott Faver's famous DVD series on games, or maybe even a little book called ***The Complete Disc Jockey***. All of these are jam-packed with excellent information, but as you study them, you must realize that hundreds–even thousands–of DJs across the country and in your own town are also reading or watching them! All of this information is external, available to every other entertainer. Yes, they are important, but they only go so far!



HAT TRICK

Being a great entertainer, and a unique one, does not require you to be the Einstein of the industry; you don't need to invent "the next big thing." In chapter one of ***The Complete Disc Jockey***, I outline how you can make the most of your own unique gifts and talents. The only truly unique features we have are our personalities. They're as individual as faces. I've heard some people say, "Well, I don't have a very strong personality," or "My personality doesn't really stand out." From the time we're little kids, we hear the much-repeated mantra that "Some have it and some don't." But this is a myth, much like when we were told "You'll catch your death of cold!" (The common cold is a virus, and has nothing to do with temperature.) Whether you realize it or not, you not only have a personality, but it is as distinct as your fingerprints!

People in theater know that, when you're on the stage, movements need to be exaggerated; voices need to be projected. Inflections and expressions simply must be bigger, so that people in the seats can follow the story being presented. The same holds true for your personality; you need to draw it out and make it "bigger." In short, simply use what you've got to its fullest potential.

Which brings me to another book: ***Personality Radio*** by Dan O'Day. Originally written for radio air talent, I've found it invaluable for my mobile career. Not only does Dan view the personality as something innate in everyone, but he also thinks of it as a muscle, which will only become stronger with exercise. People who have what they once thought of as weak personalities have gone on to become famous actors, sportscasters, TV personalities, broadcasters and, yes, even top-shelf

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mobile DJs. (Look for Dan's book online, now available as a digital download.)

INVESTING IN LESS GEAR, MORE YOU!

I agreed to help a colleague promote his DJ service at a recent bridal show, since he'd done the same for me some months earlier. It was a small affair with only three other services. Since I wasn't stuck in the booth the entire time, I got a chance to meet with and study each one. One thing immediately became clear: they were all saying (and selling) the same thing. They talked about their gear; they talked about their music selection; they talked about their lighting… but none of their faces stood out. Except for my friend, none had truly unique attire–every tux looked like the last. The only area where they were truly different and competitive was PRICE. They seemed intent on racing each other to the bottom of the price barrel!

This is in sharp contrast to another colleague of mine who never discusses his equipment, unless it's when he's alone with other DJs. At bridal shows, he's physically shaking hands; he's complimenting the engagement rings of the brides he's speaking to; he's dressed in an emerald green tux with a matching bowler hat (or some other stand-out attire) and he's always quick with a joke or interesting anecdote. Nobody remembers what speakers he uses; it's all about his relationship with them. He draws them in with nothing more than his personality, and that is what keeps him in high demand. I once asked him what his secret was, and aside from his sharp, quick-witted sense of humor, he swears by his improv classes. He's also taken some courses in acting. Both of these perform a similar function to Dan's book, bringing out the most in one's personality and helping an entertainer think in new, more engaging, and entertaining ways.

Being a great entertainer, and a unique one, does not require you to be the Einstein of the industry

GREATNESS RUBS OFF



I've always been a night owl. Even though I don't do much nightclub work anymore, my body clock won't allow me to change. Because of that, I watch a LOT of late-night TV. One night I was watching ***The Late, Late Show*** with Craig Ferguson, and it dawned on me that he was the embodiment of Roy Hanschke's philosophy. Roy is well known to DJs who've attended Mobile Beat shows for his seminar entitled "Entertaining with Your Voice." Ferguson, I realized, depended less on his stellar guests and more on his own ability to entertain with nothing but talk! In fact, one night I saw him talk so much that one of his scheduled guests had to be bumped to a later show.

All the late night comedians do this to an extent, but Ferguson is in a class all by himself. Despite his "handicap" of having a thick Scottish brogue, he uses his voice and expressions to maximum effect. His inflection is big, his expressions are big, his gestures are theatrical, and he never passes up even the traditional comic stand-bys, such as having an underlying gag running throughout his patter.

Someone once said, "I never pass up the opportunity to watch someone who is the very best at what they do, even if what they're doing has nothing to do with me." She understood that it isn't as much the product as it is the process. If you would be one of the greats, then watch them. Learn from them. Take in their discipline, technique, focus, intensity and everything surrounding the performance. Make it a part of your regimen, or simply use it to inspire.

YOU BE WHAT YOU IS

Ultimately, it is when we combine all of these ingredients that we become something truly unique. Anyone can buy a killer light show, sound system and music library. Anyone who is a music fan can put together a good selection for dancing, and as long as the music selections are strong enough, they don't even need any real mixing skills to do an average wedding. These are just the trappings of the job. What differentiates us is how we've invested in ourselves.

There is also no definitive start and end point. This isn't like a class, where you sign up and start on one day and finish on another, or a product that, once purchased, is always there. It is an ongoing process. Chops are perishable items! Education and inspiration are the food for our personalities and performances, and like food, must be consumed on a regular basis. So nourish your creativity. Build on your unique gifts and let those gifts shine through. The next time you go out to a comedy club, a night at the theater or just sit down to watch Jay Leno, keep a notebook handy. Jot down what impresses you. Take a class in acting, improv, stand-up comedy, voice-overs and other entertainment fields. And above all, never stop learning!

Until next time, safe spinnin'! MB

Stu Chisholm, a mobile DJ in the Detroit area since 1979, has also been a nightclub DJ, done some radio, some commercial voice-over work and has even worked a roller skating rink! Stu attended the famous Specs Howard School of Broadcasting and has been a music collector since the age of seven. Stu's guide to the profession, The Complete DJ, was recently released by ProDJ Publishing.



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DJ EQUIPMENT





What It Takes for a Client To Buy

LINKING YOUR SALES AND MARKETING EFFORTS TO CLOSE MORE GIGS

BY JOHN STIERNBERG •

Last time we talked about client profiling and targeting the gigs that you really want. That knowledge helps you narrow the focus. But how do your prospective clients make buying decisions? What do they need to know in order to be comfortable enough to write you a check? What is the connection between your sales and marketing efforts and programs? This article takes a look at how and why clients buy and suggests three action tips for success.

SALES 101: WHAT IS A QUALIFIED CLIENT?

If you've studied the sales process, or if you have tried to sell your services, you already know that the following is a business truism:

A client will not and cannot buy anything if he or she is not qualified to do so. The sales and marketing challenge is to get your brand message to more qualified customers.

Here are the four key attributes of any qualified client:

Money. They have the financial ability to pay your price, on time.

Authority. You are dealing directly with the decision maker, and better yet, the check writer. The person is authorized to sign the contract.

Need. Your product fits their specific situation with no compromises.

Desire. They want to do it and it feels good to them. While this is a subjective factor, it is essential because clients will not buy something that doesn't feel right to them.

Quick tip: Use the acronym MAND to remember Money, Authority, Need, and Desire. A qualified customer has all four attributes. If any one is missing, they are not qualified and will not buy.

THE PROMOTIONAL COMPONENT: HOW MANY HITS DOES IT TAKE?

Here's another truism from Sales 101: Clients will not buy anything that they do not understand. Your job is to make them understand what you do and why they should hire you vs. your competitors. So how many information hits does it take to get your message across? While there is no universal answer, you can use the following sequence or hierarchy to plan your promotion and selling activities.

Exposure. The first step is to expose prospective clients to you and your brand message. This is done through publicity, advertising, attendance at your gigs, your website, etc.

Awareness. Just because you bought billboard space on a major highway does not guarantee that the right people noticed (I don't recommend doing this—just to illustrate the point). Exposure alone does not complete the job—the client needs to connect with and remember your message.

Knowledge. It takes repeated exposure to create awareness. Once they are aware they need to know what you do (mobile entertainment as opposed to any other product) and how to connect with you. This is the critical intersection between your marketing and sales efforts.

Understanding. Once they have the basic knowledge (see #3 above), they still need to fully and accurately understand how you fit their needs, how you are different and better from your competitors, and what it takes to engage your services.

So how many marketing and sales hits will it take? At least four—one or more for each of the steps above.

HOW TO CLOSE MORE GIGS

There is an art and a science to selling mobile entertainment. It's more than just having the most Facebook fans or the most articulate elevator pitch. Here are three action tips for closing more and better gigs.

Action Tip 1. Go after qualified clients on your own terms. This technique links client profiling, promotion, and the MAND attributes. Have the confidence to walk away from unqualified clients (or refer them elsewhere).

Action Tip 2. Build your brand all the time. Create exposure and awareness through the full range of promotional tools and techniques that we have discussed throughout this series. Remember that each prospective client receives your brand message in his or her own way.

Action Tip 3: Use selling techniques to build knowledge and understanding. There's a point where your prospects have seen your name enough to be aware, but need more in order to actively considering hiring you. That's where the selling process really kicks in.

HERE'S THE POINT...

Your promotion and brand building efforts are essential, but a fancy business card never closed a sale. You need an integrated marketing and sales plan that is focused on reaching the most qualified clients. Remember that the sequence of the Action Tips is important: 1) qualify your target clients, 2) use targeted promotion constantly, and 3) build your clients' knowledge and understanding during the selling process.

Next issue we'll go deeper into how clients evaluate your brand message compared to others. In the meantime, best wishes for continued success in mobile entertainment! MB

John Stiernberg is founder of Stiernberg Consulting (www.stiernberg.com). His book **Succeeding In Music: Business Chops for Performers and Songwriters** *is published by Hal Leonard Books. Contact John via e-mail at john@stiernberg.com. You can find John on LinkedIn, Plaxo, and Facebook and follow him on Twitter.*



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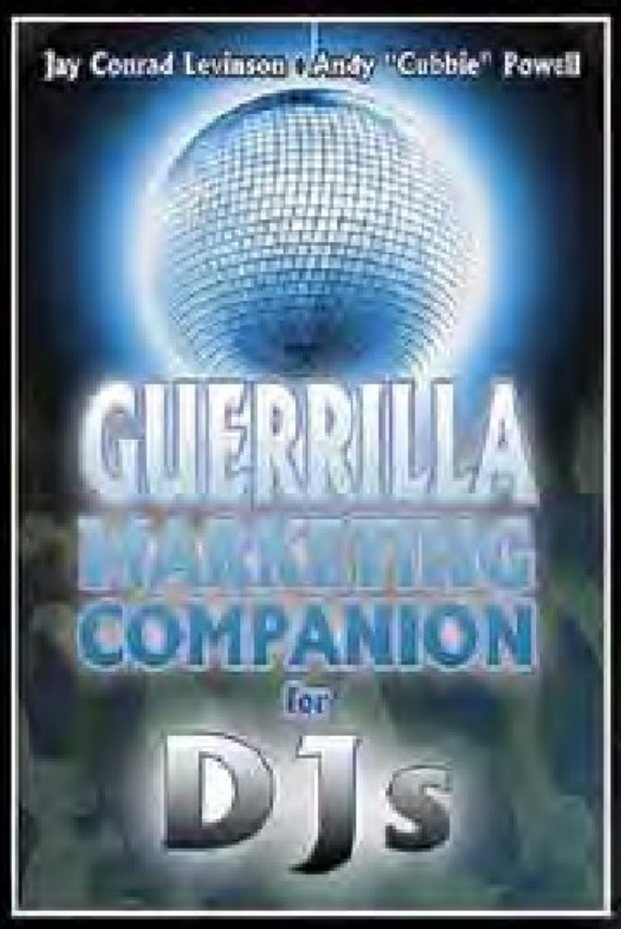
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Many Systems, Maximum Service from Sound Productions

MICHIGAN MULTI-OP GROWS FROM DEEP ROOTS IN CUSTOMER SERVICE

Jim Paetschow started Sound Productions back in 1980 while still in junior high school, After years of working hard and growing, the company now boasts 28 systems, playing music all over Michigan and northern Ohio.

Currently, in answer to customer needs and market trends, Sound Productions offers photo booths and large event production shows. The company even has a crew that travels all over the country to do production work for AFLAC insurance. But Sound Productions' main focus remains on wedding receptions. With the number of systems available and the company's high reputation, they manage to do about 2500 of them a year.

Mobile Beat : When you first started, I imagine it was just yourself and then you started growing from that point. How long ago did you go full-time with the business?

Jim Paetschow : Oh, geesh, 20 years ago.

MB : Okay. So it's been a full-time occupation for you for the majority of that time, no doubt about it.

J P : Yes.

M B : How many full-time staff do you have? I imagine the rest are part-time weekend warriors for you, right?

J P : Yep. Realistically there's six full-time staff and another 35 weekend warriors.

M B : Fantastic. Obviously you had said weddings are your biggest area. What percentage of your business would you say?

J P : Probably 60 percent.

M B : How do you get most of that business?

J P : Word of mouth is the best. We do a lot of bridal shows. We do about 23, 24 bridal shows every year and that's gotten to be part of our production stuff...in Michigan, the Amway people own DeVos Center and we do all the production for all their bridal shows. Not only do we have a booth there, we do the stage and the sound and the lights and video and the whole shebang. So that's the ultimate way to advertise at a bridal show.

M B : Tell us a little about your style—yourself and all of your DJs...

J P : We never sit down, number one. There are no chairs...

We're a lot more interactive. And with 28 systems that are all identical—I mean, every single piece is identical, right down to the Ultimate Sports Dance. Every piece of lighting's all identical. So everybody knows the same thing and you can give them all the same music though they're going do totally different shows.

And the beauty of having so many people is you can teach each other. We have what we call a "hidden video." We have 28 systems, so we have only 14 hidden video packages. The hidden video package, we record and we actually sell it to a bride and groom; sell it for $175. It's just a DVD handed to them that night. Whenever those aren't all out, we bring those back and we watch them...and whenever we have a meeting, we pull all the great ideas, or the not-great ideas off them. We watch them as a company and learn from them.

M B : So your staff's in constant training...You constantly have to have people coming up the line.

J P : We do. Training is never-ending. Training's expensive. It's very time-consuming, very expensive, but if you're going to be successful in this business you have to spend it or you just won't make it.

M B : Okay. Obviously you work with a ton of equipment. You said it's identical across the board. Give us the lowdown on what those systems look like.

J P : We have all the trucks. We own 17 trucks. They come here, they get in one of our vans. Astro Van is our van of choice. They get in their van, they know where they're going. Hopefully they've already talked to their bride and touched base with them. We really push for that. And everything's got a Garmin [GPS unit] in it...you go to your show and set up and do your thing and come home. All the equipment's loaded for them. They don't load anything. There's guys here that just load and unload vans all week long.

M B : Wow. What's your primary performance gear?

J P : Denon. Actually, Denon dual-CD. We went to computer a few years ago...and nobody liked to use it. It was boring. So we backed away from it. But now we've got a brand new computer-based system we're just introducing this year.

We have some party buses, too. We have three buses and those buses all have computers on them just because you can't really run a CD player cruising down the highway.

M B : Do you have different wedding packages?

J P : Yep. There are three different wedding packages. We start at $750. An average wedding for us is $1100. We're in rural Michigan. The city that we're in—not a city; it's a

town—has 3,000 people.

...Everybody who says you've got to be in a big city to be successful is full of it, especially in this business because you have a service and you're taking your service to the customer. So we literally are on Mackinac Island all summer long. We leave two systems up there all summer. And we go as far south as Toledo, Ohio, and everywhere in between.

Some of the big metro markets like Detroit and stuff, we don't even advertise there anymore. You're just lost in the sea of DJs, so you're kind of a nobody. And like I say, the word of mouth is great. And down there, people don't seem to talk and have word of mouth like in other parts of Michigan. I would suspect that's true in any big city.

M B : How far out from Detroit are you?

J P : About two and a half hours north of Detroit; right in the center of the lower peninsula.

M B : You guys do have a very strong website (www.sound-productions.com), a lot of video content on there, a lot of different stuff on there. What do you use to run the back end of your business site? Do you use one of the online packages?

J P : We use DJ Intelligence for the bride for planning. That's nice. You can just turn them loose with that. Saves fielding phone calls, you know? "Hey, I want to change my bridal song to this today." It cut all that out. It just got to be overwhelming; 25 to 50 brides a week we talk to, literally.







And then InfoManager's our main base. And Todd Wheat's been great with that company. He's a phone call away. We have a problem, we can call him. If we want to modify something, we can call him. He's just fantastic. He logs right in, fixes whatever we need. I would recommend InfoManager to anybody.

M B : What about goals for the next 10 years: Do you want to do more gigs or do higher-priced gigs or get more into other kinds of things?

J P : Yeah, I know. That's a great question, and I don't really know the answer to that. We have one photo booth. We bought an Apple photo booth of the real nostalgic steel, 1950's-style photo booth....But I don't know. I'll tell you, the big money's in corporate stuff. There's no end to it. Some of these shows that we do for AFLAC, they're major, major productions. They're truckloads of stuff.

We did Orange County Choppers this summer. That's the biggest show we've ever done to date. In Mount Pleasant, Michigan, at the Soaring Eagle Casino, they came and gave four custom-built bikes away. We did the stage, crew, sound, lights. That's all over our website, too. We rented a lot of stuff to do that. We rented the roof, but we did all the rest of the stuff. So that's where we want to be more focused.

The weddings will always be there. I can see us staying with 20 wedding systems and then the rest corporate.

M B : Any final words of wisdom?

J P : You know, stick with it. Everybody starts out thinking they're going to get rich quick in this business. It's taken me 30 years to get where we are. We do a million dollars a year... Take care of customers. Customer service, customer service, customer service. I just can't say that enough to people. And it's really hard to grind that into your DJ's heads. They can't have an attitude. "The customer is always right," even though they're not right a lot of times...Every business that I'm into, it all goes back to customer service. If you don't have it, you might as well go home. MB

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Total-Immersion Gameshow

A GREAT EXAMPLE OF HOW TO CREATE A TOTAL PARTY EXPERIENCE

TREVA BEDINGHAUS •

Always on the lookout for information to help DJs offer the best entertainment, we came across this article detailing how to create a complete party atmosphere based on a popular gameshow. Whether or not this particular scenario will work for you, it provides examples and inspiration for going the extra mile (and then some) in preparing a fun atmosphere that keeps party guests engaged in the party. –Ed.

Looking for a great party idea? Invite guests to your own rendition of the hit game show Are You Smarter than a Fifth Grader?" Test their knowledge, or lack thereof, of grade school facts. Much like the hit game show, grownups will find themselves in disbelief over how much they have forgotten since elementary school. You will surely make the "honor roll" when you throw this A+ party for your friends.

CREATE THE ATMOSPHERE

Make a classroom setting: Create a blackboard (or use a real one) at the front of the room to serve as the game board (Print up to six topics on the board: First Grade Math, Third Grade Social Studies, Fifth Grade Earth Science, etc., and make up several easy questions for each.)

Decorate a "teacher's desk" in font of the blackboard (Place the following on the desk: an apple, a stack of books, a pencil cup full of sharpened pencils, a globe, a pencil sharpener, a candy jar, etc.)

Arrange two student desks facing the blackboard, one for the student helper and one for the contestant.

Decorate for 8-year-olds:

- Tie red helium balloons to bright red apples and place all around the party room
- Hang grade-school poster cutouts on the walls (found at teacher supply stores)
- Stack shoeboxes at the entry to the party to serve a "cubbies" for the guest to stow their belongings
- Hang a large map on the wall
- Place an American flag in the corner of the room
- Use old-fashioned lunch boxes as centerpieces on the tables
- Print guests' names on wooden rulers and use as place markers on the tables

PLAY THE GAME

Before the party, find two or three elementary students to serve as student helpers. Make sure they are aware of how the game works. Let them know that they will be asked to answer grade-school questions. (Plan to play the game at the start of the party, so youngsters can slip away early.) Also choose a friend (if not yourself) to play the part of the game show host, or teacher.

Make sure the host is familiar with the scenario of the game.

Explain the rules of the game and ask if anyone thinks they are "smarter than a fifth grader." Choose a fun-loving, willing contestant and start the laughs. After the first contestant finishes, or graduates, choose someone else and play another round.

MAKE IT MORE FUN

Create fake money (personalized with details about the party) to award the winning contestants. Take the music from the game show and have it playing during the party. Serve sack lunches: Pack each guest a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, a bag of chips and a small dessert in a paper lunch sack. Fold down the tops and print the names of the guests on the bags with a magic marker. Place the lunch sacks in the middle of the food table and surround them with plenty of finger foods. Fill coolers with juice boxes and milk cartons (and of course have a second cooler filled with beer and bottled water).

For another fun touch, ask guests to come to the party dressed as grade-schoolers or teachers. Set up an elementary school "picture day" backdrop and take digital pictures of guests. Print the pictures and send them home in manila envelopes.

Request that guests bring a grade-school photo of themselves (if they can find one) and have a "guess the grade-schooler" game during the party.

For take-home favors, order personalized pencils and notepads. Pack them into zipper pouches or small school supply boxes along with glue sticks, fruit cups, big lollipops and Twinkies. MB

Treva Bedinghaus is a writer and mother to three small children for whom she enjoys throwing fabulous parties. For more original party ideas, visit PartiesComeTrue.com.



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THE GEAR BOOK, REMIXED

Sound System Basics

BY JOHN SCHAUER •

Mobile DJs have lots of choices in sound gear. Before you go out and buy, understanding how the gear works will help you plan where your dollars will be best invested, and get you the best bang for the buck.

MICROPHONES

There are hundreds of different models of this first piece in the sound system. They range in price from less than $5 into the thousands. Choosing the right one is a balancing act between performance and your budget. There are two types commonly used by mobile DJs, handheld and headworn.

A handheld microphone will be handled by many novice users who have little or no experience in public speaking, so choose a model with a cardioid pattern to help reduce feedback. To keep costs down, choose a dynamic rather than condenser design.

Wireless microphones add considerably to your cost (you need a receiver to go with the mic or "transmitter" to have complete wireless system) and tend to have a shorter life compared to a wired counterpart. You should always carry a wired microphone for backup. Avoid units with on/off switches that can accidentally be turned off during an important announcement or toast.

A headworn microphone is perfect for when you need both hands free for other activities, and since it is worn over the ear, the microphone element is always in the same place close to your mouth, so volume will remain consistent. New models from several manufacturers are so small that they are practically invisible. Avoid lavalier type designs since they really were designed for recording audio for broadcast and are much more susceptible to feedback.

AUDIO (PA) MIXERS

The job of the audio mixer is twofold, first it needs to amplify all the inputs, both microphones and line level devices like CD players up to a useable level so that they can perform their second function, blending the inputs together. Choosing a mixer is fairly straightforward. Count the number of inputs you have, and consider the number of sends, or outputs you might need. Make sure to add a couple of spare inputs

and outputs. This way you are ready if you need an extra roving microphone, or to provide a feed to the videographer that you were not informed about prior to the event.

A value-added feature you may want to consider in a mixer purchase is onboard digital effects. If you plan to use the system for karaoke, adding reverb or delay is a must. Having theses effects built into the mixer makes it super easy.

More and more mixers are coming equipped with USB I/O to greatly improve the audio quality coming from a music performance PC. The headphone and/or line outputs on most computers provide only marginal performance when connected to a sound system, so using USB is a real plus.

AMPLIFIERS AND LOUDSPEAKERS

Choosing an amplifier and loudspeaker combination for your system requires you to consider several factors:

What type of music or program material are you amplifying? If you regularly work at high school dances and college parties, subwoofers and large full range speakers are required, while wedding receptions and many other parties and functions would be fine with a smaller system.



Yamaha STAGEPASS 300 powered mixer - speaker combo

How many people are you planning on entertaining? A great rule of thumb for planning a sound system is 1 watt of power per person for a speech system, doubling this to 2 watts per person for background music, and making sure you have 5 watts per person for high volume music.

Are you indoors or outside? The above rules apply to indoor events. Outdoor events will require more power since there are no walls or ceilings to reflect the sound back to the listener.

Loudspeakers come in two varieties, passive or unpowered, or powered or active designs. Passive loudspeakers are less costly and require only a speaker cable to connect to the amplifier. There are numerous models with many features from many different manufacturers. Consider this type of loudspeaker if you already have power amplifiers, or if weather is an issue.

Powered speakers will need AC power to be run along with a signal cable to their location, but having the amplifier(s) inside the cabinet, designed specifically for that speaker system, provides improved performance in many cases. These are a great choice for indoor gigs.

Choosing the right gear might not be the easiest thing you need to do as a DJ, but hopefully learning a little more about the gear will make for a smarter purchase that will perform for years to come.

For more detailed material to help you beef up your audio skills, go to http://www.yamaha.com/livesound/ and click on "Reference Tools" in the menu on the left side. MB

John Schauer is the Live Sound Product Manager at Yamaha Corporation. You can reach him directly at jschauer@yamaha.com

Don't Forget the Protection

From event to event, there is one issue that many mobile entertainers neglect to consider well enough: the issue of power irregularities.

Voltage spikes put your expensive gear at risk of being damaged or completely destroyed. Even in areas that aren't lightning prone, gear will be hit repeatedly by the countless smaller spikes and surges sent out by local power utilities every day. These voltage spikes are not as severe as a direct lightning hit, but over time they have a devastating cumulative effect on today's sensitive electronics. For your gear, this means a steady decline in performance and reliability.

Surges and spikes are far from being the only problem: there's also the issue of wiring faults, a major concern for any mobile entertainer. Every time you plug your gear into the wall at a venue, you are trusting the venue to provide you with safe voltage. If there is a problem in the venue's wiring (commonly a lost or intermittent neutral line), everything you plug in can be at risk if unprotected.

Finally, there's AC line noise, which can severely impact the performance of audio equipment. Line noise introduces a variety of unwelcome elements into your mix, such as pops and hisses, along with loss of detail.

Any electrical equipment or appliances that share the AC line you are using can be potential sources of electromagnetic interference, or EMI. AM radio stations are another culprit, adding their faint signal to the collection of noise.

Believe it or not, another source of EMI is your audio system itself. CD players, processors, laptops—essentially any component using a microprocessor can add noise through their cords to the power line. Digital circuits also radiate RF noise, which is picked up by other components.

All of these problems can be controlled with a well-designed AC power-line conditioner. Nearly all conditioners filter the incoming AC line to remove the high-frequency garbage generated by factories, neighbors, and your own appliances. Some units break the physical connection between components with small isolation transformers on some plugs.

When choosing a line conditioner, make sure its power capability exceeds the power consumption of the components you'll be plugging into it. Also look for the UL (Underwriters Laboratories) or CSA (Canadian Standards Association) seal of approval, indicating that the power conditioner meets certain safety requirements. Choose a conditioner with a sufficient number of outlets for your present and anticipated needs. Although conditioners can vary between $250 at the low end and several thousand dollars for a state-of-the-art system, many excellent conditioners cost less than $500. MB

Thanks to Furman Sound (www.furmansound.com) and Robert Harley (www.hifibooks.com) for information on power conditioning.



A Time and a Place for Passive Speakers

BY AVI EL-KISS •

Following up on our recent interview with Avi El-Kiss of B-52 Professional, makers of loudspeakers and other audio gear, we asked the speaker expert to explain the function and application of passive loudspeakers. As popular as powered speakers have become among mobile DJs, the venerable passive box still maintains its stature, especially as a key component of large PA setups. -Ed

First, the basics: The purpose of a loudspeaker is to convert electrical energy into acoustical energy that our ears can understand.

Speakers that require an external amplifier (not built in) to power them are called "passive" speakers. "Active" or powered speakers are becoming more and more mainstream these days and currently outsell passive speakers, at least for mobile entertainers. For several years, we at B-52 have spent an overwhelming portion of our research and development resources on active systems (culminating in the introduction of our new ACTPRO Series).

But, regardless of this trend and the advantages that active speakers offer (we have developed lighter amplifiers with higher power output), passive speakers still have some distinct advantages over their powered counterparts: They are lighter, and more flexible in many situations. Since passive speakers are powered by an external amplifier, they can be easier to deploy in a variety of environments, including outdoor situations where inclement weather is possible. They can be built to fit specific areas, thus their continued use in permanent and semi-permanent PA installations. Also, a separate power amp can run more than one speaker. The same external amplifiers can be used to power different passive cabinets in different system configurations depending on the needs of each event.

Mobile DJs can certainly appreciate the lighter weight and greater placement flexibility afforded by a passive design. One consequence of having a speaker with a built-in amp is the need to run AC to each individual unit—passive speakers only require an audio feed, avoiding extra power cable runs that can be a hassle. In terms of performance, passive speakers allow you to manipulate the power output of your amplifiers by running direct or parallel wiring depending on the load you want the cabinets to represent to the amplifier. Passive speakers also allow you to keep all amplification and signal processing in a central location for easier access and safety. As for environmental challenges, passive speaker cabinets can be made water resistant fairly easily, since they lack electronic components that are harder to keep protected from rain and spilled beverages.

UNDERSTANDING SPEAKER TYPES

A speaker is commonly identified by the number of drivers in its cabinet. A single speaker is typically "full-range," meaning that one driver reproduces the entire audio spectrum (as in most factory-installed automotive systems). A "two-way" full-range system has a woofer (larger driver) for reproducing the low frequencies and a tweeter (smaller driver) for the higher frequencies. A "three-way" full-range speaker cabinet contains a woofer for the lows, a tweeter for the highs and a mid-range driver for the middle frequencies. A three-way system is clearer and more detailed in its sound reproduction; it can also be more efficient due to the fact that each speaker is working truly within its own design parameters. Two and three-way systems can also be 'bi-amped," that is, powered by two separate amplifiers, using an outboard electronic crossover to send the appropriate frequencies to each driver.

"Subwoofers" are specialized loudspeakers that are designed to reproduce only the lowest of frequencies and are commonly used in conjunction with two or three-way full-range cabinets. This allows for very efficient amplification configurations, where you can dedicate separate, high-powered amplification to the low end (necessary for gut-thumping dance-quality bass), since it takes more power to reproduce lower frequencies than higher ones. With passive systems you can choose specific amplifiers for each component and frequency range, allowing each part to perform at its optimal level.

MAXIMUM MOBILE PERFORMANCE: HOW TO CHOOSE SPEAKERS

So, what should a buyer look for or listen for when searching for the best gear in this category? Here are a few key things that should guide your speaker-buying:

Size and weight. Is the speaker too big or too heavy for the way you intend to transport it? If you work alone most of the time, you shouldn't buy gear that's going to require two people to move safely. Whatever you get also has to fit into whatever vehicle or trailer you're going to use along with all your other necessary equipment.

Sound—the real deal. Try to audition the prospective speakers in an environment similar to where they'll be used. Just about any cabinet can sound good in an acoustically controlled demonstration room...but not many parties get thrown in such places. If you play lots of school gymnasiums, then that would be the best place to hear the speakers you're thinking of buying. If you can't get loaners or rentals of your desired speakers, many retailers have flexible policies that would allow you to return the speakers after a real-world evaluation, as long as everything is returned exactly as it was purchased.

A word about loudspeakers. Useful information is also available at Mobile DJ-specific online forums like start.mobilebeat.com from other performers who are currently using or have used the speakers you're interested in. Such feedback can be invaluable, especially if other DJs have used your chosen speakers in situations similar to yours.

Active speakers have become the entertainer's choice for many reasons and I see this as a continually growing trend. The advantages of active speakers outweigh the advantages of passive speakers in a wide variety of situations, but the passive speaker isn't going away any time soon, especially in the installation market where running AC to each cabinet can be quite a feat. MB

Avi El-Kiss is Vice President and Product Designer for B-52 Professional.

(Check out B-52's latest active offering, the ACTPRO Series, and its performance at the recent MBLVX show on page 44.)

LEDs for the Upwardly Mobile DJ

BY ALLAN REISS •

You're running late for your gig. When you arrive, you start setting up and the lights don't work because a bulb apparently broke while you were driving. You start troubleshooting while the guests are arriving. Darts are nearly flying out of your client's eyes and you wish you could just find a great big rock to crawl under.

Has this ever happened to you? As a mobile DJ, I've experienced this and let me say, it's not a fun situation. But there is an alternative to bulbs that break because they get too hot or because they get jostled while traveling. There is an alternative to worrying that there won't be enough power left for your lights after the caterer, bartender, decorator and videographer plug in their equipment.

The answer is LED lighting.

Light emitting diodes, or LEDs, have been around for more than 50 years but only became a viable lighting source for DJs in recent years. Today these lights are on the verge of turning incandescent and halogen lamps into relics of the past. LEDs offer the opportunity to create effects such as color mixing and aerial and floor beam effects that could not be produced with traditional lamps. They can do so while being more eco-friendly than their lighting counterparts.

And even if "getting the green" is a much higher priority than "going green," LEDs still offer huge advantages. First, the anticipated lifespan of an LED is at least 50,000 hours, which means you'll stop spending money on lamp replacements. Second, because LEDs draw very little power, you can link dozens of units on one 120 volt, 20A circuit. They also weigh much less than their traditional counterparts and emit much less heat, which makes duty cycles a thing of the past.

Since I started using LED fixtures, my girlfriend helps me set up and tear down. She happily carries a 5 pound LED fixture, whose previous counterpart weighed 35 pounds. And she's no longer afraid to touch a light after a show because she knows she won't get burned.

LED BUYER'S GUIDE

Here are some key factors to evaluate when you start looking at LEDs.

One consideration is price. LED fixture prices have come down as supply and competition among manufacturers has become greater. While it is true that an LED PAR can still costs more than its halogen counterpart, in the long run your investment will be less due to the long life of diodes and their ability to withstand bumps without breaking. You will also save on gels, which are not necessary because LEDs come in colors.

To accurately compare two brands of LEDs, don't compare the wattage. Look at the drive current. The intensity of LEDs of the same wattage varies depending on the drive current, which is expressed in amps or milliamps. For example, a 20W LED driven at 6A will be far more intense than a 20W LED that is driven at 1600mA.

Make sure you buy the right fixtures for your lighting rig. I've created a sample rig (below) using two categories—one rig to produce aerial effects where fog can be used. The other product list is for venues that prohibit fog where you will want to use surface effects, meaning the light will play off the floor, wall or ceiling.

Another factor to consider is functionality: Does this fixture do what I want? Many times I can use a preprogrammed, plug-and-play fixture. Other times my clients are pickier, so I will do my own programming. I want one fixture that will do both.

Finally, is there room to grow? As I become more proficient, I may want to move into programming with DMX control. Make sure the fixture you're considering can communicate with DMX if you want that added control.

LED lighting is not a flash-in-the-pan technology that will fade away. Each year more and more traditional fixtures are being converted to LED. In the past three years, moving head spots and washes, scanners and a wide variety of effect lights have all become available in LED format and are quickly becoming the lighting norm. MB

Allan Reiss is CHAUVET's Product Manager for Club/DJ Products.

Basic lighting Rig for Aerial Effects:

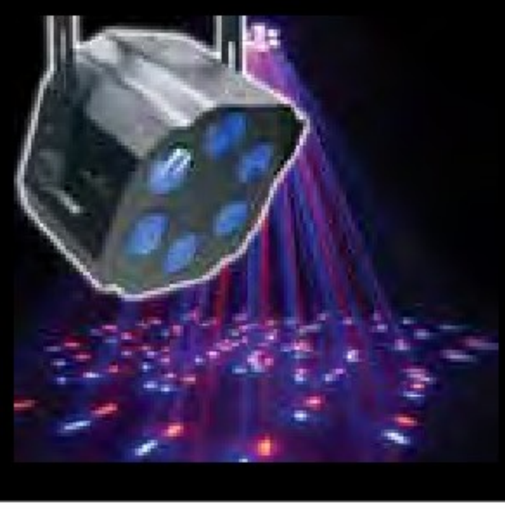
Your primary fixture should be an effect light with enough colorful beams to fill the area. Next, purchase a laser. Then add a wash light.



CHAUVET Double Derby X

Basic Lighting Rig for Surface Effects:

Start with a wildly colorful effect light with adjustable strobe speed and a variety of color combinations. Add a laser and a wash light.



CHAUVET Swarm LED

Elevating Your Lights-and Your Image-with Trussing

BY KEN KAHN •

If you've been a DJ for any length of time, chances are you've amassed a collection of special effects lights. This is a good thing, because professional lighting can really enhance your show. But when you set up for a gig, where do you display this lighting?

For too many DJs, the answer to this question is "various lighting stands," or even worse, "whatever tables, chairs or counters happen to be available." If such a makeshift setup sounds all too familiar, then maybe it's time to take the next step and invest in trussing for your lights.

There are many reasons why it makes sense for DJs to rig their lights on truss. Not only does a truss structure protect your lights (and audience) from accidental bumps, it gives your performance a more polished, professional look, which in turn makes your services more valuable to clients and allows you to charge a higher fee per event. Using trussing also makes it easier to hang your fixtures at the appropriate height and angle for the room, improving the quality of your light show. Plus, you can use your truss setup for things other



than lighting, such as flying speakers and other audio gear, to make your workspace neater and more efficient. Trussing is also great for displaying signage about the event you're emceeing, such as a corporate logo or congratulatory message to a bride and groom. With the addition of screens and truss warmers, trussing can even become an attractive design element in its own right and enhance the visual appeal of your show (but more about that later).

Manufacturers have made it more feasible than ever for DJs to use truss by introducing new, more lightweight, and affordable products. Which brings up a question we often get asked by DJs: "What type of truss setup should I buy?"

As a mobile DJ, you're going to want the most efficient setup possible—a rig that's simple to put up, take down and transport. Given the variety of (often less-than-spacious) spaces you work in, you also need something that doesn't take up a lot of real estate on the floor. And, of course, as a performer you want your truss rig to look good too. At Global Truss, we have addressed these needs with two products designed specifically for mobile DJs: the Arch System 1 and Truss System 1. Both are compact all-in-one systems, they're lightweight, attractive, easy-to-assemble and very affordable. Plus, they're sized just right for a typical DJ booth.

Whatever brand of truss you choose, you should buy from an established dealer with knowledgeable salespeople who can help you choose the right system for your needs and budget, and also provide after-the-sale support and service. You should also make sure the company's products have been tested, rated and stamped with an industry certification, such as TÜV approval. (TÜV is an international product testing organization.) A manufacturer can claim that their truss can do the job or support a certain amount of weight, but without official certification there's no way of knowing for sure. Truss manufacturers should be able to show you documentation of industry certification and/or engineering reports.

In addition to the truss itself, you will need accessories to set up your structure and rig your lights, such as pins, R-clips, couplers and clamps. Accessories such as clamps should be certified, too, to ensure they meet safety standards. For example, Global Truss offers aluminum clamps for attaching lights to truss, which are TÜV-certified for weight load capacity – something that's essential for both safety and protecting your fixtures from damage. Standard C-clamps and O-plastic clamps are not TÜV-certified.

Once you have your trussing and accessories, you're all set to create your rig. If you're using a turnkey system like Global's Arch 1 or Truss 1, which consist of two vertical side pieces plus overhead trussing for hanging lights, you would typically position the truss structure behind you. If, on the other hand, you're using individual pieces of truss to create "totems," it's generally best to put them on the sides of the dance floor.

Wherever you position your truss, you should consider incorporating it into the overall design of your show. Gone are the days when truss was just a utility item to be hidden away. Many entertainers and clubs today value the edgy, industrial look that trussing provides. Truss manufacturers have contributed to this trend by coming out with a variety of attractive products and finishes, such as Satin Aluminum, which fit in nicely with the industrial theme.

Want to make your trussing really sizzle? There are a number of products you can add to turn your truss structure into a standout visual design element that will greatly enhance your show or venue. A fabric truss screen (made of flexible white Lycra) will instantly create an impressive-looking scenic backdrop for your show, such as the Global Screen from Global Truss or one of DJScreen.com's offerings. The white fabric can be used as a projection screen for video presentations and ambient color light displays.

Truss warmers are products often used to make trussing part of the overall visual experience. Installed inside the truss itself, truss warmers are small colored lights that reflect off the structure's shiny finish, enveloping it in a glow of color.

When you look at all that can be done with truss these days, you can see it's no longer just something used for raising your lights—it will elevate your whole performance as well. MB

Ken Kahn is General Manager for Global Truss America (part of the American DJ Group of Companies).

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NAMM Unleashed

A BRIEF LOOK AT THE YEARLY NEW GEAR ONSLAUGHT

BY JAKE FELDMAN •

I always look forward to January each year because let's face it: I'm a gear junkie. From lighting and audio to gadgets, I should be on one of those billboards for literacy that says "I Geek Gear."

At the beginning of each year, the National Association of Music Merchants puts on the pinnacle of American gear-centric music industry trade shows. And each annual four-day display generates great anticipation for the next few months of product releases from every major manufacturer in our industry.

This year's NAMM show (held January 14-17 at the Anaheim Convention Center) was marked a crucial juncture for the music equipment business. While we're climbing steadily out of the economic slump that has been hampering purchasing decisions for the better part of two years, we're also moving in exciting new directions in technology. On the lighting end, the LED movement is no longer "just a phase," as evidenced by the offerings of many of our industry's major players. From an audio perspective, new technology is allowing DJs to purchase production-level gear at DJ-oriented price points (and in the process providing DJs with a greater variety of tools to work with). On both fronts, one thing is certain: DJs are in for a great year in gear! And so once again this year I roamed the NAMM floor looking for the latest and greatest from the leaders in mobile DJ-oriented gear. Here is what I saw:



On the floor, the first booth I visited was **Marathon**. This year, the folks from the LA-based supplier of all things DJ were especially excited about their V2 Limited Edition case series that is specifically designed for large and small format CD players in either coffin or single unit designs. The cases come in either red, blue, black, or traditional flight-style designs. Also coming from Marathon is the very cool Black Series.



Over at **American DJ** I saw a slew of new products that are going to be available for the DJ market this calendar year. I'm particularly impressed with the VIZI LED, which is a new moving head with all of the virtues of LED (and impressive output I might add), complete with a full size frame and only 20 lbs of weight. For effect lighting, ADJ also unveiled some heavy hitters, including the Nucleus LED (which is a six-mirrored centerpiece effect and part of the TRI series), the REVO Rave (latest in the REVO series), and my personal favorite, the Jelly Fish. This unit combines DMX capability with a great sound active mode and a clear plastic shell that offers a color changing visual appeal.

The big news from American Audio was the unveiling of their new VMS4 Velocity MIDI Station (See photo above). This unit gives you just about everything you need to DJ with digital files.

Upstairs (setup pictured right), **Pioneer DJ** was rocking with sets from DVDJ Jay Brennan and DVDJ Unique showcasing their new players (the CDJ 900 and 2000) and mixer (the DJM 5000—which debuted on the Mobile Beat 2009 Summer Tour). The CDJ 900, in particular, is an especially attractive unit for mobile DJs, in that it has the ability to play a variety of media from CD, USB, and other memory devices with Pioneer's signature level of control, and at an extremely reasonable price point.

Back on the main floor, **CHAUVET** was showing the music products industry its latest wave of lighting gear designed to dramatically augment the audio. With new products such as the Double Derby X, Kinta X, LED Mushroom, LED Pinspot, 4-Bar (pictured above), and Intimidator Spot 100 and 200, innovation was abundant. Particularly for me, and from a DJ standpoint, the Double Derby X and Kinta X were exciting due to their focus on DJs and their freshness.

Over at **Rane**, the new SIXTY-EIGHT mixer (USB mixer with built-in effects and cue points—native to Scratch Live 2.0) was a standout. 2010 also marks the first time that Rane will venture into production pieces, with the introduction of the AM1 and AM2 Automixers, designed for multi-input microphone/instrument/media feeds with an easy-to-use format.



Across the floor at **B-52 Professional**, the ACT Series was introduced to the DJ market. ACT consists of the ACT-18XV2 subwoofer, ACT-15X, and ACT 1515X—making mobile DJing a whole lot easier without having to lug around those heavy

amps! (*See elsewhere in this issue for info on the company's ACTPRO Series, which saw action at the latest MB tradeshow.*)

This year off the floor and in a private showroom, **Denon** showcased their new DN-X1600 mixer, DN-HC5000 controller (native to Serato Itch), and DN-S700 MP3/Disc Player. The DN-HC5000 offers more versatility while retaining most of the same features that have kept the HC-4500 at the forefront of controller technology.

Amazingly, one of the big buzzes this year was the entrance of **Line 6** into the microphone market. I specifically wanted to talk to the company about their new X2-VDR-955 microphones and what that means for the DJ business. (See elsewhere in this MB for a review of these Line 6 microphones as they performed at MBLVX.)

At **QSC**, the continued success of the K Series was being celebrated as well as slew of big plans for 2010, including some dramatic new product rollouts. As an early user of the K Series, I look forward to the next phase of QSC speaker evolution, to be revealed soon.



Next our schedule took us over to the big booth at **Shure** in the main hall, which was electric with artist signings, and also yielded info on the introduction of new DJ headphones, the SRH750DJ. Along with pristine audio quality and promised durability, the SRH750DJs come with 90 degree swivel ability, removable headphone cups, and 50 mm drivers.

Omnisystem, the manufacturer of outstanding lasers, lights, and effects systems (including a killer LED Screen), continues to delve into audio with its Beta 3 sound line. I was impressed by a new powered full range speaker and the 18" active subwoofer, both great signs of Omnisystem's commitment to audio within the DJ industry.

Always on the lookout for unique products of interest to DJs, I came across **Monocase**, which was showing off some new gear bag models, including The Producer and the 365 DJ Pack. These packs are specifically designed for rugged travel through airports, clubs, and the mobile scene. By adding removable inserts and specialized compartments, these soft-sided cases show a practical approach to small-scale DJ mobility.

Grundorf also introduced a new DJ facade, which includes a wooden frame combined with transparent metallic looking plastic that looks outstanding when backlit. The facade—specifically designed for mobile DJs—is also lightweight, at less than 25 lbs.

Stanton brought out some new exciting products as well, notably the RM.416 rack mount mixer (shown left). The RM.416 is a four channel, USB-compatible mixer with crossover control, 3-band EQ, and two front panel microphone inputs. Out in summer, the mixer provides versatile input options for the ever-expanding DJ playback arsenal.

Lastly, but certainly not least, I visited with **Aiweidy**, relative newcomers to the lighting trade. Aweidy is a manufacturer of effects lighting that hits both the DJ and production markets. Specifically catching my eye were their LED dance floors, which can hold a great amount of weight and put out a considerable amount of light. Coupled with the fact that these floors are also extremely affordable, I may have to get my hands on a few.

At this year's winter NAMM event, I found the gear was both improved in quality and as a whole was marketed towards all buyer types. While other years might have included more high end pieces, It can be surmised that this year, due to our emergence from under a financial chokehold, the industry is realizing that they still possess a wide variety of patrons, from the novice to the expert (and everywhere in between). MB



"So, if you and the boys are ever looking for a new front-of-house sound guy, here's my card..."
– Mobile Beat gear guru Jake Feldman with Tito Jackson.

NAMM Mobile Beat DJ Showcase

At NAMM, every year off of the exhibit floor there are 4 or 5 stages running at different times of the day, with bands playing anything from rock to bongo drums to bagpipe bands. Well this year saw the advent of the DJs hitting the stage. On the Saturday evening of the show, DJs took over the stage in the Anaheim Hilton's lobby (adjacent to the convention center) with thousands in attendance, watching the big football game, drinking, eating, and enjoying mixes by DJs and VJs.

B-52's DJ Ken Heath, along with American Audio's DJ Sparky B as MC, warmed up the crowd for Pioneer's Vjs, including DJ Jay Brannan and DVDJ Unique. Great sets were spun by all, with Ken and Sparky B playing to the audience as if they were at a corporate event or big private party, then the Pioneer jocks pumping the party scene up to a club-like atmosphere. Hopefully this showcase was start of a new NAMM show tradition.



Got Gear? Don't Forget the Entertainment

BEING A CROWDPLEASER TAKES MORE THAN JUST RACKING UP THE NEWEST TOOL (TOY)

BY MIKE FICHER •

Grace Jones, rave fanatics and mobile entertainers may be slaves to the rhythm, but, should the latter be slaves to the equipment? Your answer to that question may go a long way toward enhancing your ability to actualize the goals of each event, and more importantly, the enjoyment of your clients and guests.

FEEL THE NOISE

Throughout the pages of Mobile Beat, you will always find amplifiers, microphones, MP3 controllers, LED lights, game show systems, software, video systems and much more to seduce, enthrall and engage your visual senses and propel you into spells of brainstorming (and even wallet-opening).

Gear is the shiny air cleaner on the 1967 Camaro, the luscious cherry on the delectable banana split, the blinding necklace adorning the décolletage of the Hollywood starlet.

But, is gear the show?

BLAZING NEGATIVES

Survey entertainment and presentations where gear is a minor or non-existent part of the picture. What do you see?

Improv players perform and entertain with no props. The art appears quite popular, with almost every major city—and many smaller and mid-sized regions—boasting a professional troupe or two or three. It is now even encompassing public scenes, such as the increasingly popular freezes and Thriller routines.

Mimes use space, movement and the viewer's imagination to weave entertaining stories.

Stand-up comedians rely on their routines, their wit, their observations of current events and human nature, and their awareness of the moment to encourage audiences to laugh.

Dancers command their practice, their passion and their artistic and athletic skill to engage and entertain friends, audiences and, occasionally, judges.

Public speakers may be armed with PowerPoint slides, vivid illustrations and laser pointers. Yet their success will ultimately be judged on their ability to inspire, to sell, to instill the goals of the presentation in their guests.

What do mobile entertainers count on to succeed at an event?

SCORCESE TODAY?

In the infancy of the mobile trade—and for a couple of decades after—DJs gained quite a bit of work merely by establishing an on-site audio presence. Not much more was needed to book gigs, although quality voice work and emcee skills were valuable.

A couple of dance crazes later (remember country line dancing in the 1990s, the salsa wave and the swing revival at the end of the century?), and with the advent of digital technology and heightened audience expectations, the mobile DJ evolved into the mobile entertainer, the suave commander of dance, games, skits, toys, raffles, and audience involvement. Not only was technology having a significant impact on the industry, in



conjunction with this creative progression, enhanced entertainment education became the norm. Jocks enjoyed the benefits of technology to supplement their increasing skill set.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Are we witnessing the next step in the evolution of the trade? Is the mobile entertainer transmogrifying into the entertainment director, less the interactive guru than the deft artistic administrator of a multimedia story?

Is communal bonding through a shared audio and video experience morphing into multiple individual entertainment choices (particularly audio) in a communal setting?

MCLUHAN REVISITED

To execute the entertainment goals in the past, a solid, dependable, occasionally

TURN TO PAGE 56



Mobile DJ, dance instructor, emcee, voice actor, writer, teacher, and improv comedian, Mike Ficher owns and operates Dance Express, based in Bend, Oregon. A three-time presenter and host at Mobile Beat conventions, Mike has been expanding the public's definition of mobile entertainer since 1986.

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"THIS IS WHERE I BUY ALL MY GEAR"

MBLVX TURNS IT UP

Mobile Beat Las Vegas 2010 — MBLVX — pushed the needle into the red with an unprecedented level of excitement and enlightenment for DJs who made the trek to the Riviera this past February.

Increasing in its quality and quantity of events, seminars and exhibits, the show gave attendees more than their money's worth. With attendance down less than 10%, MBLVX stood out among recent music industry trade shows that have seen bigger slips in numbers of people and exhibitors (hopefully an indicator of brighter economic times for the DJ industry at large). As the largest conference for professional mobile disc jockeys, MBLVX provided topflight workshops and presentations that educated and inspired attending DJs to achieve greater success.

Early arrivals caught the Super Bowl spirit on Sunday and hit the ground running on Monday as the seminar schedule kicked off with a full day of free offerings to whet attendees' appettites. Monday night saw an off-the-hook "Tribute to Soul Train" produced by living industry legend John Rozz. Whether they came to get their groove on (complete with a traditional Soul Train dance line), or just to stare at the crazy costumes many were sporting, it was a party that members of the crowd will not soon forget. (Many in attendance noted that this seemed like the best-attended Mobile Beat "welcome party" EVER.)

At the show's Grand Opening on Tuesday morning, the Mobile Hall of Fame gave Rozz its latest Lifetime Achievement Award and inducted Karl Detken as its newest member. (See the December 2009 for a profile of John Rozz and page 35 of this issue for Karl Detken's story.) The energy level elevated more with master motivator Kent Julian's keynote presentation "Live (and Earn) It Forward" covering success in all aspects of life, as well as business.

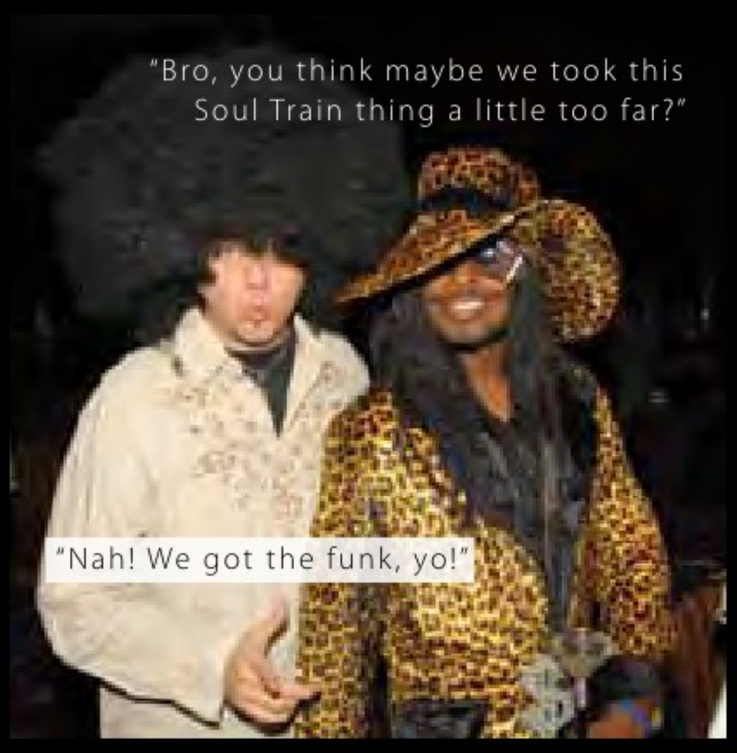
The Tuesday evening parties saw some legendary hip-hop action as the ADJA and NLFX Professional sponsored the incomparable Coolio and Pioneer DJ served up the Sugar Hill Gang and their own DVJs spinning a video mix. The Sugar Hill Gang impressed many as a down-to-earth act able to bring the noise and rock the house without offending.

On Wednesday and Thursday, seminars shifted into high gear, including the NLFX Pro Academy and its popular hands-on equipment tutorials; the exhibit floor and demo rooms opened to a tide of gear-hungry DJs. Thursday also featured a special presentation by Don Piper, author of the bestseller ***90 Minutes In Heaven***. His unique experience provided DJs with





MC Mike Walter shares the mic with the night's crazy Soul Train conductor, Johnny Rozz.



"Bro, you think maybe we took this Soul Train thing a little too far?"

"Nah! We got the funk, yo!"



A fantastically funkadelic DJ tears up the dance line orchestrated by Marcello.



Some DJs are extremely coordinated.



TO 11 ... AND BEYOND

inspiration and food for thought.

A highlight of every MB Vegas show, American DJ's Customer Appreciation Party outdid itself yet again, providing the crowd with a high-energy club atmosphere and mega munchies. DJ Kool, of "Let Me Clear My Throat" fame, served up a tasty mix, and his homey Sparky B kept the joint jumpin' with his trademark mayhem. Plus, the ADJ party featured one of TWO weddings that



Keynoter Kent Julian raises the roof and opens some minds.


DJ Kool clears his throat and turns the tables.

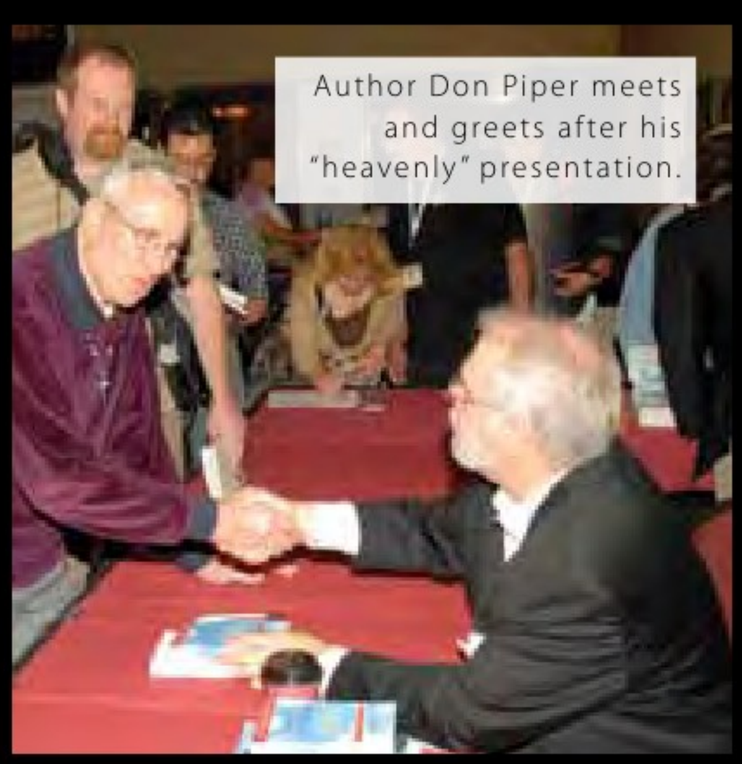

The Sugar Hill Gang positively rocks the house.


Lifetime Achievement honoree John Rozz (right) with show producer Mike Buonaccorso.


Coolio makes the Top of the Riv a DJ paradise for the evening.



Dave Sehl (DNA Ent, Norwalk, OH) stands dazed and surrounded by his Sensational Gear Giveaway winnings from: American DJ, ADJA, B-52 Professional, QSC Audio, Frankenstand, Beamz, Line 6, DigiGames, and Promo Only. (See article for details.)


Author Don Piper meets and greets after his "heavenly" presentation.


Rachel Welch and Jimmie Hontz, DJ duo from Gardner, KS, tie the knot at the ADJ party.



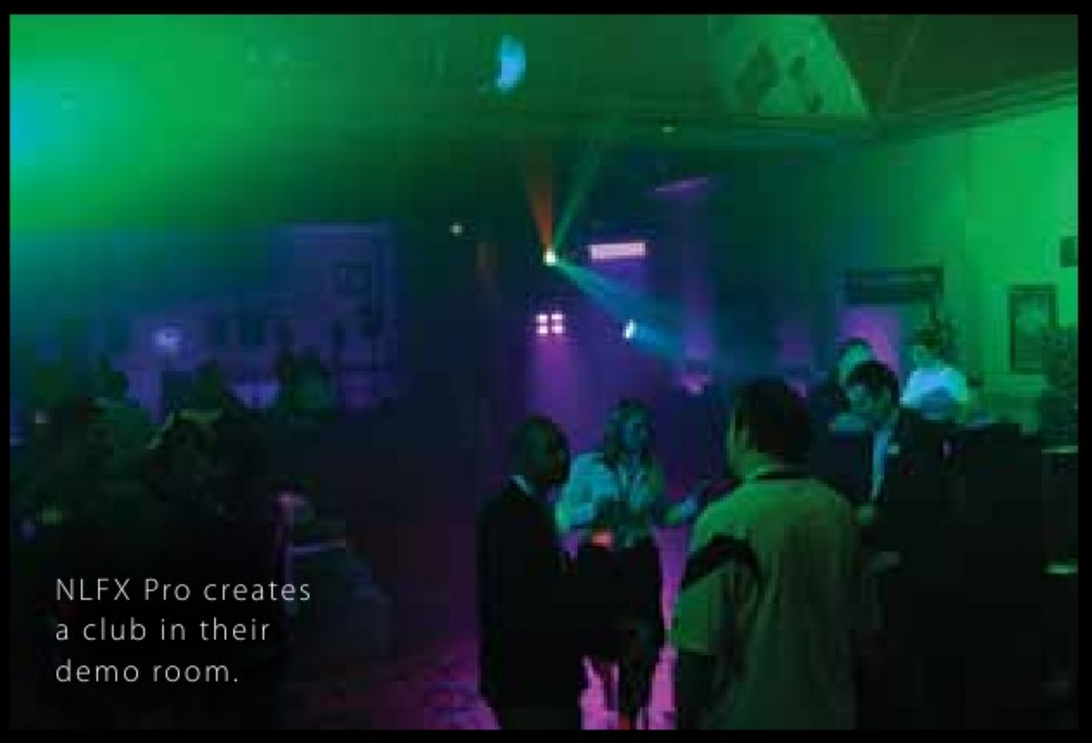
"Dude, is that a bell or a whistle?"



If you build it, they WILL come.



The tide of DJs rolls into the exhibit hall.

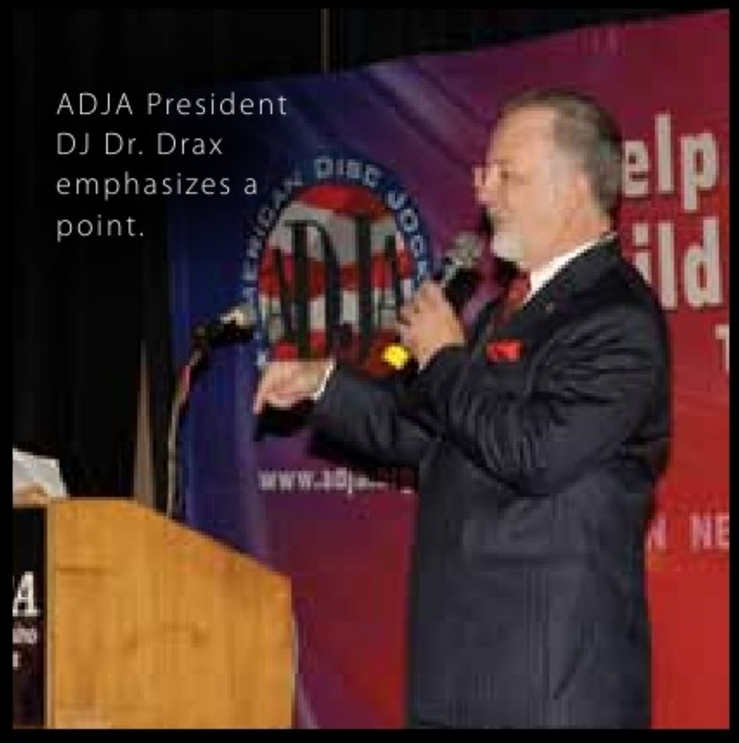


NLFX Pro creates a club in their demo room.

happened at MBLVX. This one was the real thing.

Capping off the week's festivities with a grand finale, the huge load of technology known as the Sensational Gear Giveaway went to Dave Sehl of DNA Entertainment in Norwalk, Ohio. Equipment and other prizes came from the following: American DJ provided a full lighting rig; the American DJ Association comped a membership; B-52 Professional brought out one of its innovative Prodigy CD/Mixer combo units; QSC Audio provided some award-winning K Series powered speakers; Frankenstand gave its unique powered speaker stands; Beamz provided one of its laser triggered music control units; an X2™ Series XDR955 wireless mic system came from Line 6; DigiGames gave some game show hardware; and Promo Only provided subscriptions to some of its services.

Plans are now being finalized for Mobile Beat Las Vegas 2011—dubbed MBLVXX in honor of Mobile Beat's upcoming 20th anniversary. Look for announcements online at MobileBeat.com and in the May issue of Mobile Beat...then set aside the time and don't miss the next Mobile Beat Vegas extravaganza! ***MB***



ADJA President DJ Dr. Drax emphasizes a point.



The Game Master, Scott Faver, demonstrates crowd control.



DJ, radio host, music historian and all-around crowd pleaser Mike Ficher goes behind the music with Elvis and the Beatles.



When Mr. Lucky (a.k.a longtime show host Jim Johnson) gives you the thumbs-up, you're good to go.

Karl Detken: Champion of DJs and DJ Technology

FROM KARAOKE TO THE LEADING EDGE OF DJ TECH AND BEYOND

The latest inductee into the Mobile Beat Hall of Fame, Pioneer's Karl Detken, has been a driving force behind the evolution of DJ hardware, and a tireless advocate of DJing as a true art form. As a product planner, marketing director, and artist relations director for Pioneer Pro DJ over the last 18 years, he has promoted the best in technology for DJs of every stripe. To find out more about Karl's contribution to the DJ world, check out his induction video at MobileBeat.com.

Mobile Beat : Give us a the inside take on how you got into this whole DJ thing.

Karl Detken : Well, I started off as a musician early in the days with a love of guitar and singing, and basically fell in love. That was my passion, my vocation for a long time. Somewhere around 1992 I started a family and realized that the life or a touring musician would never allow me to have a 401(k). So Pioneer at that time had an opening in their karaoke division for the person that would do the licensing and programming of their karaoke. So I took that job and spent the first six to eight years working on the karaoke product.

In that time, one of the things I ascertained was... in order for karaoke to become mainstream, it needed to get out into the consumer public. So I started pitching that art form of karaoke -- if you can call it an art form -- to the movie studios and TV studios. And we started to get some interest. Shows like Mad About You and even The Simpsons; movies like The Cable Guy and My Best Friend's Wedding, Duets, and whole lot more started putting in karaoke scenes into their films. And we saw karaoke explode as a mainstream form of entertainment.

During that time, the media format or the delivery format of karaoke changed from laserdisc to CD-G, and it basically hampered our ability to release music with the artist that CD-G was able, because licensing on CD-G and laserdisc was different. Laserdisc was video and you had to get a sync license, and some of the artists like Madonna and Bruce Springsteen did not allow their music to be synced with any kind of video. So CD-G became a stronger format, and companies that were doing CD-G were growing. So that particular market began to shrink for us.

But...we were seeing that a lot of mobile DJs were using our laserdisc karaoke for their bar mitzvahs and weddings and corporate events, [and] realized that there was a need for different kinds of CD players and different kinds of mixers that DJs would use. So around 1993, 1994, we started working on the CDJ.

And we released in '95 the CDJ-500G, which was a top-loading tabletop CD player, and it was revolutionary in a couple regards. One, its format and size was different than what had been available before. Rack mount was the norm for a mobile DJ, and putting out this tabletop was different. It acted more like a turntable, although it didn't scratch. So it grew and subsequently we started to release other products that would complement that, like our mixer series and our Vector series and what we saw as the kind of birth of Pioneer Pro DJ in that market. And really, it was about four or five years of working with that product.

And also, I saw the need for it to become a standard, we would need the top touring superstar DJs using our products. So I started evangelizing and training top-level guys



on this product. And at first, it was a hard sell because a lot of these club DJs were coming from vinyl. They were hardcore vinyl purists, and it took a while. But when the CDJ-1000 came in in 2001 that was kind of the changing point where it really avalanched for us in terms of acceptance, because of that emulation and the tactile feel of the CDJ-1000 being so close to being like a vinyl turntable.





...So after the two years, it started to become the standard. And [then] we went platinum; sold over a million players. That was back in 2007, so we're quite a bit farther from that. But it has become the world's standard in terms of a nightclub or a top DJ and even a lot of the mobile DJs on the CDJ-1000 and the matching DJM-800.

So my job has basically been helping in the planning and the features and designing of the product as well as for about eight years marketing the product; and of course, being the liaison and friend to the guys that are out there being the rock stars. It's been a good ride.

R B : Tell us a bit about how DJs have evolved as entertainers, from your perspective.

K D : That's a great question, Ryan. Basically somewhere in the '90s, the image of the DJ did change from being somebody that was just a person that was pressing play and playing music to actually being an entertainer, whether it was in a club format or on a big stage or at a wedding or the bar mitzvah. It really took on another level, and I think this is what kind of raised the whole industry and the game in regards to the whole DJ industry.

And what we saw is not only guys looking at the products that they used and wanting to use our products, but wanting to learn how to be better entertainers; wanting to learn how to provide their customers, the audience, with just a feeling that they have received more than they would have ever imagined from their DJ. And this really didn't come from anything I did. This was just the industry in itself evolving into being a more refined industry; the DJs turning now into entertainers and providing better service for their clients.

...It was an interesting transition for me as a musician...it really took my boss at the time, a Japanese gentleman that said, "I want you to go out and DJ and go out there and do clubs and do weddings so you can understand what our customer wants and you can help in development of the products."

So I went out and did that and started off with like a $90 club night, karaoke night back in 1994. And I actually fell in love...what you do as a DJ and what you do as a musician is very similar. You are evoking. You're trying to evoke a feeling of goodwill for the people, whether it's hearing music or singing music or dancing to music. You're trying to bring them to a different state; get them out of whatever stress and pressures they have of life. So I really found a passion in becoming a DJ, becoming an entertainer.

And like I said, in that, one of my goals was to get to the top guy. But what I also discovered is the importance there was a core importance for me and a goal to also talk to every single kind of DJ, whether it's the DJ working for $200 a night at the club or the wedding DJ that was making $800. It was important, and a lot of that was done at some of these trade shows like the Mobile Beat that I attended every year. Great place to have a one-on-one with so many different kinds of entertainers and DJs. So that just allowed me to get a different point of view from all levels, which helped in the production and the designs that we subsequently would come out with...



R B : Where do you see your life going in the next couple years?

K D : Well, right now I am going to take a little time off, because over the last 18 years I practically have taken no vacations. So my focus right now is to just kind of be with my family and enjoying it. That was one of the reasons I was a little late to this interview...I needed to walk my kids to school. It's just nice to be able to spend time with the family.

I've got a lot of opportunities in front of me that I'm evaluating. My real goal is to find a partner that really wants to build the next world standard for the DJ community. So I'm just kind of chilling right now in Southern California and this beautiful weather. MB

For an extensive, uncut interviewww with Karl, head over to MobileBeat.com.



Karl Detken (c), flanked by Mobile Beat Publisher Ryan Burger (l) and Mobile Beat Tradeshow Director Mike Buonaccorso (r).

Mixing Business With Pleasure

THE DJ CRUISE, NOVEMBER 2009

BY STU CHISHOLM •

For years I've been hearing stories of all the insane fun that DJs have had on a working vacation called the DJ Cruise.

Some years my gig schedule prevented me from attending, while other years the budget just couldn't handle it. But this year was going to be different, because I was asked to present a seminar based on my book, The Complete Disc Jockey. Finally, I'd get to see what all the buzz was about.

After about six hours of air travel, I arrived in Long Beach, CA, at the dock of the Carnival Cruise Line's brand new "fun ship," Splendor, the setting for this year's DJ Cruise. Only one word can describe this ship: immense. At just over 950 feet, it is the largest of the Carnival fleet (for the moment), and the word "luxurious" seems inadequate; the ship is designed to be as lavish as possible! Every wall, ceiling, fixture or surface is a dazzling feast for the eyes. Making things even more interesting, our destination would be what is known as the "Mexican Riviera," with ports of call in Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan and Cabo San Lucas, places I've only heard about as prize destinations on game shows. The DJs in attendance would be attending seminars on the inbound and outbound sailing days making the cruise part conference and part vacation.

DOWN TO BUSINESS

But first things first. Once boarded and settled in, and after a mandatory safety drill, I went to the designated lounge where all of the DJs were scheduled to meet. In the frantic effort to get sponsors, pack and take care of the travel details, I hadn't really looked at the roster of attendees and speakers. A quick look around the room told me that I was among a pretty accomplished group! At long last I met Debbie McKenzie, the high-energy organizer of the cruise who, up until now had been just a voice over the phone, and her husband, Alan. Together they run their company, Amazing Sounds, and Debbie also runs a travel business, making her a natural organizer for the DJ Cruise. Handshakes and introductions set the stage for the next morning's seminars.

As the keynote speaker, my presentation was first, which let me get my "job"out of the way so that I could relax and enjoy the other speakers, the next one being David Louis. David runs a highly successful DJ company called Dynamic Sounds in Hawaii. A very big part of his success is his ability to think beyond the gig, creating workshops that both help his clients as well as creating a natural network of vendors, which increases the number of paying clients for all involved. (Check out www.groomsworkshop.com for more info.)

Next up was Ron Michaels, who is not only a DJ, but an avid cyclist and marathon runner as well. His presentation, "Building Your Referral Network" gave valuable insights into why some referrals or leads don't turn into bookings and what DJs can do to be more successful closing the deal and getting/giving referrals that get results.

The next morning brought Alan McKenzie's seminar, "How Do You Rank?" Alan, a talented computer guru, laid out exactly how search engines work, the dos and don'ts of website construction, and how DJs can get higher rankings that result in better placement and, therefore, more hits.

Ken Heath's presentation, "Keeping Cool, Calm and Connected" focused on some of the nuts-and-bolts of our business—literally! Ken covered all of those connectors, inputs and outputs and other goodies that keep our gear playing nicely, and can help you to be flexible in the face of last minute demands and emergency situations. Ken finally answered a long-burning question of mine: Why do they call microphone jacks "XLR?"

The final presenter was Michael Smith of Revolution Entertainment. His topic: "Public Relations for Mobile DJs." This is an area that many confuse with marketing, or don't even think about at all. Michael described how you are already doing PR whether you know it or not, and how it's better to be in control of it. Public relations, unlike marketing, puts the focus on the clients and what you can do for them.

Having attended a lot of DJ shows and expos over the past few months, I was impressed with the quality of the presenters and their unique range of topics. Plus, the smaller, more intimate workshops were especially conducive to in-depth conversation during the Q&A portions. Everyone would take home much more than just fun memories.

FOOD, FOLKS AND FUN

Speaking of fun, I had some trepidation about the cruise. The last one I'd taken was with my parents when I was less than

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The Most Mobile DJ Anywhere

AN OCEAN RENDEZVOUS WITH DJ JONCARLOS OF CARNIVAL CRUISE LINES

BY STU CHISHOLM •

Jamaican native DJ JonCarlos Barwise holds court nightly in the Red Carpet Nightclub, the incredible, multi-million-dollar hotspot on board the Carnival Cruise Line's flagship, Splendor. Sailing for up to nine months a year, this makes him one of the most mobile DJs on the planet!

His day can begin with hosting other shipboard events before beginning his nightclub shift at 10:00 PM and going well into the next morning. I was lucky enough to hang out with him on several evenings during the DJ Cruise.

Stu Chisholm: How did you become involved with Carnival Cruise Lines?

JonCarlos: Well, I grew up singing, writing and playing keyboards, and eventually ended up playing keyboards in resorts around Montego Bay, Jamaica. Sandals resort was one of them. One day, I was introduced by one of my band mates to some musicians who were on vacation for three months from their Carnival contract. They asked me to fill in for their keyboard player. We mostly played reggae music.

S C: So how does one go from playing in a band to being a DJ?

J C: I would finish my job in the reggae band and, on my time off, would visit the club. I love to dance so I would visit a few times and, while the DJ would take a break, I would spin a few tunes for him. He let me take over for him for some nights and I had the crowd crazy...was spinnin' and even out on the floor a few times, interacting with the crowd. They loved it! I had a good time and even got some good recommendations, so I decided to apply for the job.

S C: What's a typical day like on board ship for you?

J C: Life on board is basically just hard work! But a day for me is also fun, partying with people from all over the world, playing some interesting song requests. Sometimes it can be a challenge, but I mix a wide variety of music to get everyone dancing.

S C: Does the cruise line have any say in what you play during your shows?

J C: They provide all of the music. We get the monthly issues of Promo Only, plus a few additional things that we are licensed to play.

S C: How do you stay on-top of what's hot/current? Do you listen to any radio stations while off-duty?

J C: I use the internet a lot to find out what's new. I also ask my land-based DJ friends what is hot out there.

S C: Do you see being a cruise ship DJ as the achievement of a goal or a stepping-stone along your career path?

J C: It is an experience for up-and-coming DJs, since there are a lot of people involved on a cruise ship that you have to



please and meet their expectations and requests. It can be hard on a career, because no one knows you're here or sees you as a popular DJ, being confined to a ship. There are limits at sea for a DJ to promote himself.

S C: Any advice for aspiring DJs who dream of a life at sea?

J C: It will be an experience! Resort entertainers are a community, so get to know them.

S C: What are the best perks of the job?

J C: Meeting and interacting with different people from all over the world!

S C: What do you see as the biggest problems or inconveniences that go along with the job?

J C: Not being able to use your own gear! Most DJs can be pretty anal, and buy the equipment they like working with. When asked what they use, they'll brag "Serato," or something, but on the ship, we use what's there. I still prefer to use CDs, mostly.

S C: Are there any DJs or other entertainers that you admire, or consider your influences?

J C: My influences include a lot of great musicians/music producers. Just to name a few: Brian McKnight, Babyface, Stark & Rodgers.

S C: Have you ever played weddings? Do you like them?

J C: I played for many weddings receptions and always try to do it to my best. It's a lifetime memory!

S C: So what do you do for fun when not working?

J C: I like to dance and learn new dance moves, sing, write songs.

S C: When we spoke the other night, you mentioned that you were starting a recording career. Please tell me about that.

J C: I have been building a recording studio with my brother and working on a single I'm hoping to get released in the near future. I want to get it out sometime next year. I don't have a specific title for it yet.

S C: Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years?

J C: I see myself living my dreams: producing music, touring… maybe achieving all the goals that can never be met on the cruises.

S C: Thank you so much for your time!

J C: My pleasure. MB

Mixing Business with Pleasure

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

ten years old. With visions of Kathy Lee Gifford singing and seniors playing shuffleboard, I left the seminars with very low expectations, since it just didn't seem like my idea of "fun." All I can say is, sometimes it's nice to be wrong! First of all, the food was simply amazing, and I really had to work to pace myself. All day long you could get pizza, burgers, and even soft-serve ice cream! In the evening, the main dining room presented a menu worthy of a five-star restaurant. (Debbie, being the creative hostess, always had a fun theme for our tables, too!) If that wasn't enough, there was also 24-hour free room service!

Whatever your tastes, there was entertainment somewhere that filled the bill. Latin music fans could hang out at the Robusto Bar and enjoy live Salsa, Reggaeton and Merengue dancing. Or you could enjoy live piano music and sing-a-longs in the Piano Bar. A large casino was available for the gamblers, and there were several shows in the Spectacular Theater featuring swing music, dance lessons and even a comedy show. (Our own DJ Merlin, who is a talented trumpet player, sat in with the band for the grand finale show.) Of course, I often found myself, along with a new friend, Mike Daehne of Mirada Entertainment, holed-up in the Red Carpet Nightclub enjoying the sights along with the sounds laid down by the ship's DJ, JonCarlos. (See the ProDJFile on Jon following this article.) Mike also gained some shipboard fame when he sang "The Monster Mash" during a karaoke party!

A SHORE THING

The main highlights of any cruise are the ports of call, and our unofficial itinerary was the "Mitch Taylor Tour." Mitch Taylor, of Taylored Entertainment in northern Michigan and a past DJ Cruise participant, had raved about a few spots to David Louis, so we set out to find them. The first was a restaurant that was literally on the beach in Puerto Vallarta. I'm happy to report that it does exist, the food is top-notch and it perfectly captures all of the ambience that is Mexico. I also took the time to explore some Mexican music stores. Unfortunately, none of our stops were overnight, so we didn't get the chance to explore any of the nightlife of Mexico—something that maybe should be considered when planning future cruises.

On the return leg of the cruise, Debbie passed out some great prizes that were donated by various sponsors, including QSC, Promo Only, Prime Cuts, Carnival Cruises and many others. To further spice things up, Debbie had us working hard on a scavenger hunt all during the cruise. Congratulations to David Louis for finding EVEYTHING on the list! There were so many prizes and so much swag, nobody went away empty-handed. I'd also like to take a moment to thank my own sponsors for getting me to the cruise: Bill from Universal Manufacturing, maker of my custom lighting trusses (www.universaltruss.com), and Bob Kliemann of DJ Sounds, who provides excellent DJ Jukeboxes that DJs can rent to their lower-budget clientele (www.rentaljukebox.com), and my intrepid publisher, Ryan Burger. They made it possible for me to give YOU a peek at this year's DJ Cruise! (As soon as info is available on the next one, it will be here: www.djcruise.com.)

Until next time, safe spinnin'… and sailin'! MB

Crossing Borders

THE FIRST CANADIAN DISC JOCKEY ASSOCIATION SHOW

BY STU CHISHOLM •



At the beginning of last October, the Canadian Disc Jockey Association held its first DJ Show in London Ontario. The organizer and CDJA President, Doug Scott, invited me to present my seminar, "Supplement Your DJ Income…WITH DJ INCOME!," at his show due to the buzz from the MBLV.09 in Las Vegas. Once again, I'd get to experience an expo from both sides of the podium; there would turn out to be many differences.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

As with all first efforts, Doug and his crew had their share of problems, the most immediate one being the sudden cancellation of the original venue, the Western Fair Agriplex. Mere hours before vendors and attendees were scheduled to arrive, Doug was informed that the Agriplex wouldn't be properly prepared on time. This potential event killer was quickly dealt with by the fact that London also boasts a state-of-the-art convention center which just happened to be available, and not far from the original venue. After a wave of frantic e-mails, phone calls and text messages, everyone arrived at the impressive London Convention Center as if the expo was planned there all along.

SHOWTIME!

On the first day of the show, I was impressed by the fact that, though this was a first effort, the dealer's floor looked as good as any expo I'd ever attended, chock-full of lighting, gear and amazing deals. Oh, yeah, and a TON of swag–all those promotional freebies that manufacturers and vendors pass out to promote their products. Right by the entrance, several vendors were promoting the latest offerings from Pioneer, Denon and Allen & Heath. I was handed a rather unique Denon screwdriver set that fits inside of a key chain, always useful for a quick tweak. Next, the T-shirts were flying out of the JBL display, showing off their latest version of their EON powered speaker systems. All around the room, several vendors were passing out those wonderful canvas bags, good for toting cables, mics, 12" vinyl records and…other swag! My favorite area was at the rear of the room; the "store," manned by Ryan and the P.A. Shop, the giant Canadian DJ gear supplier who also sponsored the show.

MUSIC CENTRAL

But the true emphasis at this event seemed to be music. Canada's laws have several quirks that sometimes confuse me (and I'm not the only one, as many Canadian DJs are confused as well), and these can get a DJ into hot legal water if they're not careful. The industry has responded by offering several great options.

First off, ERG is a well-known Canadian music supplier that offers monthly CD subscriptions in several different genres. They were there handing out samples, including a series called Back Traxx, a monthly compilation of those great old songs and 12" mixes that ruled the dance floors of the past, yet can still ignite a party today. The sample I got, from May, 2007, had classics by Cameo, Klymaxx, the Gap Band and Rick James! ERG's other series include Nu Music Traxx, Urban, Dance and two flavors of Latin: Tropical and Regional Mexican.

On a less traditional tip, another sponsor of the show is a company called ZipDJ. (www.ZipDJ.com.) Zip DJ is a digital DJ pool that offers digital downloads of "all the genres that matter," from over 250 music labels worldwide. Again, the legalities of downloading music in Canada differ greatly from the U.S., making services like Amazon MP3 and iTunes out of bounds. ZipDJ provides the answer. Their music is all licensed by the AVLA (the Canadian equivalent of the RIAA) making any downloads completely legal for subscribers.

A similar service was being offered by HD by Symphonex, but they had upped the ante by offering a free 320 GB portable hard drive and laptop bag for those signing up at the show. (More swag!) High-quality MP3 downloads for low cost seems to be their mantra. You can visit their website at: www.HD-DJ.com. The only question they couldn't answer at the show was if their service is available for DJs in the US. I will do some digging and provide an answer to that question in a future article.

Across the aisle, I spotted the DJ Companion booth, where music again was the focus. Next to their books of trivia and contests that have become a staple for many mobile DJs, this time out they were also offering a selection of CDs including one called Cocktail Jazz, made specifically for a typical wedding cocktail hour. I gratefully accepted the complimentary copy that Rob Savickis offered me and played it at my next wedding reception the following weekend. The 17 tracks are perfectly suited to the job, with a sequence of familiar standards and classics, and the 74-minute running time will easily cover all but the longest of cocktail hours. The most unique disc, though, was one called Fern Viola Anthems. If you've ever been suddenly asked to play the national anthem of another country, you'd be well stocked if you own this disc! With both the English and French versions of "O Canada," Britain's "God Save the Queen," the "Star Spangled Banner" and anthems of Italy, France, Germany and others, this is an international tour-de-force! See more about this disc and all the others they offer at: www.djcompanionrecords.com.

TICK TOCK...

When it was time to give my talk, I reluctantly left the dealer's floor and headed down to the conference room. My seminar is based on my book, The Complete Disc Jockey (available now at the Mobile Beat online bookstore) and outlines the many jobs available for DJs beyond mobile work and radio. This has become especially important in the U.S. due to the sagging economy, but Canadian DJs haven't suffered a similar economic downturn, so my focus for them was more on how to expand their careers into other realms of entertainment. My thanks to all who attended.

Not to sound biased, but to me the best seminar that I attended was by my friend, Dan Nichols. Called "Deep J," it definitely resonated with the audience, showing how many of the obstacles we face in our business come from ourselves! Even us long-in-the-tooth old timers came away with some new insights and a list of things to work on. Dan, being a DJ, is unlike any other "motivational speaker" I've heard. He cuts to the core of what we do, who we are and what we need to succeed. You can find his articles in the ***Disc Jockey News***.

Other seminars included Tom Haibeck's "How to Emcee a Wedding," Steve Torok's seminars on uplighting and the blind speaker test, Sid Vanderpool on interactive games, Ed McMurtry's "Arts & Parts," demonstrating creative productions, Barry Kay on Mitzvahs, and Randy Wolfe covering ballroom dancing and what songs go with each style. Additional highlights included Brian Henry's "Pumping Up Your Corporate Accounts" and Brad Mousseau's talk on social media. The series was rounded out by 16 or 17 seminars aimed at club DJs by Chris Brooks, Michael DuMont, DJ Zoltan, Yale Fox, Nick Fiorucci, Anthony Chliaropolous, DJ White Gold, Adam Plante, DJ Starting From Scratch & Jason Matthews. All told, a jam-packed roster. (Apologies to anyone I missed.)



NIGHTLIFE IN THE NORTH

After the show, two "after parties" were scheduled. Unlike the elaborate affairs of some other expos, these seemed more like meet-ups, where a place was chosen and everyone could just show up and mingle. While some seemed disappointed, it resonated with me as being more typical of the laid-back Canadian style. Our first stop was at a trendy London club called The Tap House. On a Sunday night the place was less than packed, which I considered a plus. My cohort DJ Brick and I met-up with our Canadian friend and visitor to the Detroit leg of the Mobile Beat Tour, Jack Corns, and an interesting couple from England. While the DJ working the club did a superb job of mixing, the music was what I sometimes refer to as a "beat show," with little in the way of lyrics and lots of dubs, which is excellent for dancing and hooking-up, but not to conducive to shop talk. We decided to avoid the bigger "official" after-party at Club Lg (Club Large) and take our little group around the corner to a place coincidentally called Jack's.

This turned out to be more our speed: a real, unpretentious, college-student type of bar. Jack introduced us to his friend, Danny Buragina, who had the DJ/VJ duties that night, playing real songs with real lyrics. Finally we got to hear Lady Gaga, the Black Eyed Peas, Sean Kingston and Rihanna! We grabbed a table and talked way too long into the morning.

A FUNNY THING ABOUT CANADIANS...

The next day had us back at the Convention Center for day #2 of the expo, but something didn't seem quite right. The dealer's floor was pretty busy, but it didn't dawn on me what was wrong until the seminars. The rooms were nearly empty! Although the people who did attend were vocal and energetic, attendance was definitely off. My own seminar was broken up into two parts, and attendance was easily 1/3rd of the day prior.

As Doug explained it, the majority of Canadian DJs have day jobs, and very few came from far away. So, when Monday rolled around, most went back to work. This is a sharp contrast to DJs in the U.S. who will take time off of work for the duration of the show, be it two days or a week. This led to an interesting conversation about a good work ethic vs. misplaced loyalty. Is it better to put one's job first, or to put one's own business before someone else's where you just happen to work?

ONCE MORE INTO THE BREACH!

Back to the dealer's floor, we again made the rounds, visiting the booths of SF Marketing, Sounds Distribution, Soundcraft , Intellimix, all representing over 50 brand names of the hottest DJ gear, M-Audio, and, finally, the official show sponsor, Tricerasoft, showing off their innovative software solutions for DJs. There was even The School of Spin, an actual school that teaches the art of being a DJ. (Hey guys...can I recommend a good textbook?) We roamed the floor until it was time for the grand finale where Doug announced the winners of the door prizes and raffles. There were so many prizes, just about everyone won something! I was really blown away by the amount of support that all the vendors gave to the CDJA and the DJs of Canada. The banner over the entrance said "First Annual DJ Show." If that holds true, and Doug and his crew build upon what they've learned, then next year's show should be on par with any DJ event anywhere! I highly recommend that DJs from everywhere in North America make it a point to put the next CDJA Canadian DJ Show on their calendar next October.

Until next time, safe spinnin'! MB

Spinning a Different Kind of Disk

I feel that I must mention one thing about Canada that quickly became apparent: they're CRAZY about Tim Horton's! Now, I know that Horton's is a Canadian company with great products, but seriously, do they need one every mile? I'm not kidding when I say this: It was only about three miles to our hotel, and we passed three Tim Horton's shops. This is a country seriously in need of doughnut rehab! I began to wonder if they had one way up in Yellowknife. I wouldn't bet against it.




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Shock and Awe

B-52'S ACTPRO SERIES IMPRESSES AT MBLVX NIGHT TIME EVENTS

BY J. RICHARD ROBERTS •

If you happened to stay in the Riviera's Monacco Tower during the MBLVX show, then you might have noticed a rumbling Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday nights. No—Las Vegas was not stricken by an earthquake, and yes—that was a good thing. What I'm referring to is the amazing system provided by B-52 Professional for the night-time events at MBLVX, which included performances by The SugarHill Gang, Coolio, DJ Kool, DJ Sparky B, and the recipient of this year's Mobile Beat Lifetime Achievement Award, John Rozz. Along the the building-rattling loudness, by-and-by large attendees commented that the system was the best they had heard at MBLV parties.

ANATOMY OF A MONSTER

The system itself was a bit of a behemoth, utilizing sixteen 18" powered subs (ACTPRO 18S cabinets), eight dual-15" powered full-range loudspeakers (ACTPRO 1515's), and eight 12" powered monitors (ACTPRO 12M's). The system put out and impressive (at max) 22,000 watts. Those who visited the Top of the Riv for the nightly events know, however, that 22,000 watts definitely is not needed in the space (176' x 60'). Still, it was nice to have all of that headroom and no worries about pushing an insufficient system into overload.



Conversations about a sound provider began to take place among Mobile Beat's production team soon after MBLV09. While this was indeed going to be a professional sound reinforcement event, the crew wanted to showcase the gear of companies that really support the national DJ industry as much as possible. Avi and the gang at B-52 jumped at the opportunity to show off their latest line, the ACTPRO Series.

"It's a win, win really," remarked Mobile Beat's Technical Director Jake Feldman. "They (B-52) are a great supporter of the DJ industry and this series is designed to handle the toughest applications around."

Even though the idea of a manufacturer providing a sound system for the evening events was tossed around during the entire planning process of MBLVX, the specifics of a deal were not in place until this year's NAMM convention (one month prior). And to B-52's credit, they delivered a superb product with only a couple of weeks notice. In fact, B-52 literally finished and tested the cabinets (yes, they are US-made in the heart of Southern California) only a few hours before they were loaded onto a truck for delivery to the Riviera loading dock (by none other than a B-52 employee). And as a testament to quality work, the cabinets sounded, looked, and even smelled great right out of the box (I love the smell of new speakers).

THE SPECS

Now I know that 22,000 watts may seem like a large system to most DJs, but be aware of the versatility a system like this allows. As all of the cabinets in the system are self-powered, a company could do either one large (2,000-student) event or four smaller (500 to 600-student) events with the same system. In Mobile Beat's case, the system needed to not only sound like a concert system should, but also look impressive. On both fronts the system delivered, giving the DJs in attendance something to look at and also something to really feel. (And hear a few floors down in their rooms, if they left the party early).

All of the cabinets feature birch construction and a black textured-paint finish (the best choice by far for a truly mobile system). Each ACTPRO 1515 is comprised of a 1" exit driver mounted in a 90° x 60° constant directivity horn for even dispersal of sound. Knowing there would be a tightly packed-crowd, the 1515's were ground-stacked four per side on top of the ACT PRO 18S subs. This extra height allowed the high frequencies to travel the length of the room (as length to width ratio at the Top of the Riv is a problem). For the low



end, the 1515 full-range cabinets feature Celestion SP-1500 tranducers and the 18S feature B-52 SP-1804 propietary subwoofers.

According to Feldman, the decision to go with powered boxes was an easy one: "For us it was all about ease, because the whole production is sent via truck from Iowa to Vegas. With passive speakers you not only have to attribute truck space to the cabinets themselves, but to racks of amps and racks of crossovers and effects. Those of you who have ever trucked a large production, you know that racks of amps are in most cases so heavy that they do not stack well for transportation." (The B-52 speaker system weighs in—in total—at 3,296 pounds). Internal crossovers (in the cabinets) made it possible for this production to work with minimal outside processing (one dbx Driverack—mostly for feedback suppression and a bit of frequency tuning), which also saved weight in transportation.

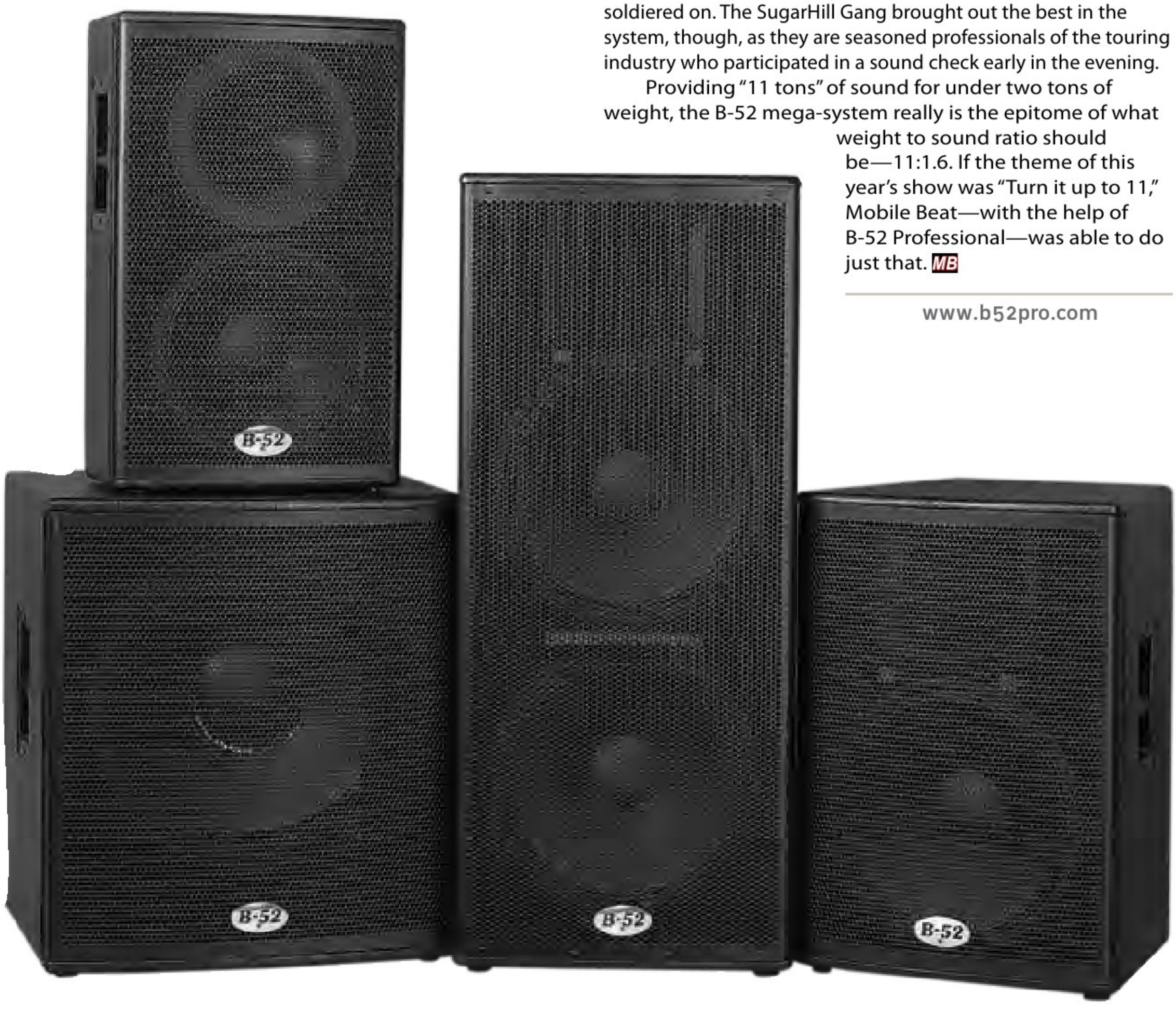
Power at the venue was also a bit of a consideration, given that there is only so much power available at the top ballroom of a 24-story tower. In all, the system is rated (at maximum) to draw 77.6 amps, which is far less than similar systems. For smaller events without the aid of of a power distribution box this equates to four full 20 amp circuits (in newer venues equipped with 20 amp service). In older venues and most gyms (with only 15 amp service), 6 circuits free of all other loads would be needed. However, in the case described earlier where the system is paired down for multiple different engagements on the same evening, the subs draw (at max) 2.5 amps each and the 1515s draw (at max) 3 amps.

THE RESULT

Judging by the positive response this system received, and from what I heard myself, I would venture to guess that this was one of the best years for sound at night-time events since the show's inception. I do realize, however, that pleasing everyone is not possible and in a room full of DJs that some will complain just to complain. Monday's party hosted by John Rozz sounded crystal clear and was received fantastically by all who attended. Tuesday admittedly marked a bit of sound trouble with the opening acts, not due to the sound system, but instead to a simple defiance of the laws of sound (you cannot fix audio that comes from the source too hot and to the front-of-house/monitor boards already peaked—it will cause distortion regardless), but the B-52 system soldiered on. The SugarHill Gang brought out the best in the system, though, as they are seasoned professionals of the touring industry who participated in a sound check early in the evening.

Providing "11 tons" of sound for under two tons of weight, the B-52 mega-system really is the epitome of what weight to sound ratio should be—11:1.6. If the theme of this year's show was "Turn it up to 11," Mobile Beat—with the help of B-52 Professional—was able to do just that. MB

www.b52pro.com



Walk the Line

LINE 6 X2™ XDR955 WIRELESS MIC ROCKS MBLVX

BY J. RICHARD ROBERTS •

When preparations began for the MBLVX nighttime events nearly a year before the first act was to hit the stage, two considerations were put into effect: The acts had to be heard and they had to be seen.

The visual part was easy with the addition of screens and augmented lighting. Audio issues, though, were another story: At least five wireless mics were needed at one time, in Las Vegas—a city famous for overuse of wireless mics. As if this wasn't enough, the artists themselves had to approve of the mics AND they had to sound awesome. With the shows being held in the infamous Top of the Riv, the Riviera's penthouse level venue, which is literally a glass hallway for sound, there really was little room for error. Not just any mic would do. Enter the XDR955 Wireless Microphone from Line 6.

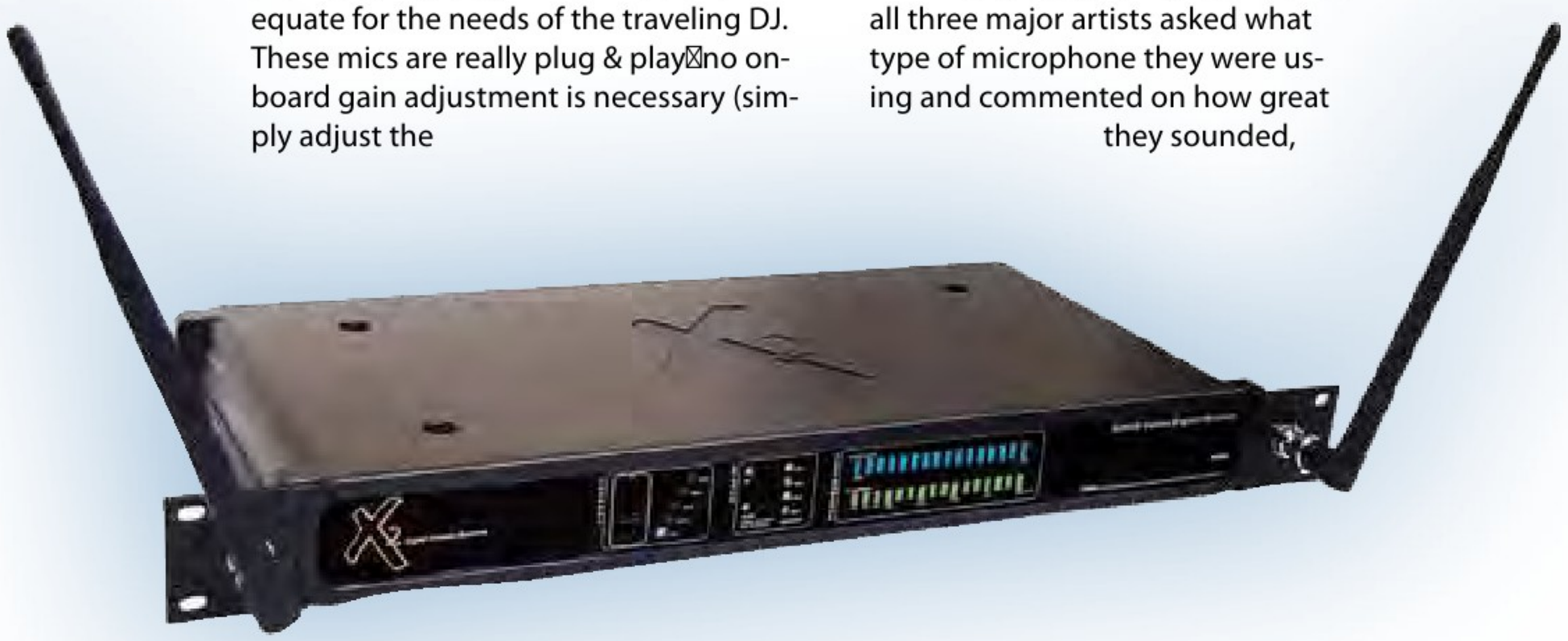
NEW LINE FROM WIRELESS WIZARD

Line 6, with endorsing artists ranging from Brad Paisley to The Edge of U2, isn't really new to the wireless transmission game. For years, the company has been at the forefront of wireless instrument transmission with proprietary technology that, from most accounts is the industry leader in that field. Late last year, however, Line 6 introduced the XDR955 as part of their X2 series, representing the company's first foray into wireless vocal microphones. Based on the same technology heard on stages all over the world and used by some of today's top performers, these microphones represent an extension of technology that only seems natural for a company who has built their reputation on reliability in the live sector.

Paired with the XDR4 Receiver, the XDR955 achieves phenomenal response, operating from 902 MHz to 928 MHz, (well above the soon-to-be history 700 MHz range). There are also five selectable channels in which to transmit (meaning you actually can have five wireless mics on at the same time), which utilize Line 6's proprietary Virtual Wireless Transmission technology.

SO EASY A DJ CAN USE IT

(I'm a DJ, so I can joke like that.) Even though the mics in this example were used in a live performance situation, one can surmise that if they were good enough to gain the approval of industry veterans like Coolio, DJ Kool and the Sugarhill Gang (true touring workhorses) then certainly they will be more than adequate for the needs of the traveling DJ. These mics are really plug & play no onboard gain adjustment is necessary (simply adjust the volume/gain on your mixer) and with five secure channels for transmission, they will work pretty much anywhere.



The XDR4 is rack-mountable (using an included kit), with an antenna that folds to fit in almost any rig. At 2.5 lbs, the receiver also won't break any backs, while the transmitter weighs in at 12.5 oz., with batteries. The unit can accommodate 1/4"TRS (unbalanced) and XLR (balanced) outputs and has an LCD display depicting Channel, Battery Life, Diversity, RF, and Audio Level.

PERFORMERS RAVE

I first learned of this product at NAMM 2010 during a visit to Line 6's demo room. After seeing the product on display and actually hearing the product at MBLVX for the first time (and in one heck of a "test run") I was impressed at the clarity and intelligibility the mics posses. True to their marketing, there were no pops, hisses, or clicks that are commonly associated with any situation where you have that many microphones in such a close proximity. As a matter of fact, these mics were very close in response and audio clarity to wired microhones, and provided a great gain-before-feedback ratio.

In any case, during sound check all three major artists asked what type of microphone they were using and commented on how great they sounded, both in the monitors and in the mains. The high ends were outstandingly crisp and there was no low-end feedback that is common when a performer/speaker is yelling at a very close distance directly into the mic. (Rap acts can be difficult to mix because of the

delicate limbo between chorus/singing and the screaming of a "hype man." With these mics, the limbo wasn't so delicate and voice meshing was actually consistent.)

I did, however, see one small difficulty with their design--the channel button. At one point on the opening night the channel button on the mic was inadvertently held down, which changed the channel of the mic and required a quick swap out with another XDR955 while we readjusted the channel. For the second and third nighttime events, the locking function on the mic was engaged to avoid any more mishaps. In actuality, the likelihood of this happening again in the same way is very low and the situation was seen as a very minor inconvenience (of a couple of seconds). Still, remember if you are working with performers to make them aware of the placement of the buttons or engage the locking function.



THINKING ABOUT THE LINE

There was much to appreciate about these wireless mics. First, they come from an experienced and reputable manufacturer who has already set themselves as industry leaders in wireless transmission. Second, they sound amazing and have a user flexibility that allows for a worry-free performance with up to five mics operating simultaneously. Next, they garnered rave reviews from some performers who have worked with all types of equipment. Finally, they performed flawlessly enough to earn the praise of some of the harshest critics around—the DJs that populated the audience at the nighttime events at MBLVX.

These mics fall right into line for a working mobile DJ. From construction to operation to sound, it seems that in the XDR955 Line 6 has a product that has "versatile" written all over it. At a street price of less that $400, there really is no comparison between this unit and other mics at the same price point. After seeing these mics in action and their positive effect on performers and listeners alike, I would say its time for the DJ industry to walk the line. MB

www.line6.com





CELEBRATING THE EIGHTIES

LOOKING BACK AT A DECADE OVERFLOWING WITH INDISPENSABLE DJ TRACKS

BY JAY MAXWELL •

1980s: Classic Rock

	SONG	ARTIST	YEAR	BPM
1	YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT	AC/DC	80	128
2	POUR SOME SUGAR ON ME	DEF LEPPARD	88	85
3	FOOTLOOSE	KENNY LOGGINS	84	174
4	JESSIE'S GIRL	RICK SPRINGFIELD	81	132
5	LIVIN' ON A PRAYER	BON JOVI	87	122
6	SWEET CHILD OF MINE	GUNS N ROSES	87	125
7	I LOVE ROCK AND ROLL	JOAN JETT	82	95
8	HURT SO GOOD	JOHN MELLENCAMP	82	126
9	UPTOWN GIRL	BILLY JOEL	83	130
10	HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT	PAT BENATAR	80	128
11	EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE	POLICE	83	117
12	ALL SHE WANTS TO DO IS DANCE	DON HENLEY	85	116
13	BRASS MONKEY	BEASTIE BOYS	87	116
14	ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST	QUEEN	80	110
15	DON'T STOP BELIEVING	JOURNEY	81	119
16	KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF	GEORGIA SATELLITES	87	115
17	ADDICTED TO LOVE	ROBERT PALMER	86	112
18	MONY MONY	BILLY IDOL	87	136
19	SUMMER OF '69	BRYAN ADAMS	85	139
20	SHARP DRESSED MAN	ZZ TOP	83	126
21	BACK IN BLACK	AC/DC	81	92
22	GIMME ALL YOUR LOVIN	ZZ TOP	83	121
23	SIMPLY IRRESISTABLE	ROBERT PALMER	88	136
24	WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE	GUNS N ROSES	87	123
25	GLORY DAYS	BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN	85	118
26	SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO	CLASH	83	114
27	DUDE (LOOKS LIKE A LADY)	AEROSMITH	87	127
28	START ME UP	ROLLING STONES	81	122
29	UNDER PRESSURE	QUEEN/BOWIE	81	114
30	YOU CAN CALL ME AL	PAUL SIMON	87	129
31	CUM ON FEEL THE NOIZE	QUIET RIOT	83	144
32	BORN IN THE U.S.A.	BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN	85	118
33	TAKE ME HOME TONIGHT	EDDIE MONEY	86	133
34	TELL HER ABOUT IT	BILLY JOEL	83	92
35	JUMP	VAN HALEN	84	130
36	PRIDE AND JOY	STEVIE R. VAUGHAN	83	126
37	JUST LIKE HEAVEN	CURE	87	152
38	GOT MY MIND SET ON YOU	GEORGE HARRISON	87	150
39	GIRLS, GIRLS, GIRLS	MOTLEY CRUE	87	141
40	SMALL TOWN	JOHN MELLENCAMP	85	126

1980s: Dance

	SONG	ARTIST	YEAR	BPM
1	CELEBRATION	KOOL & THE GANG	81	122
2	THRILLER	MICHAEL JACKSON	84	118
3	BILLIE JEAN	MICHAEL JACKSON	83	118
4	BUST A MOVE	YOUNG M.C.	89	121
5	SUPER FREAK	RICK JAMES	81	132
6	GET DOWN ON IT	KOOL & THE GANG	82	111
7	KISS	PRINCE	86	112
8	YOU DROPPED A BOMB ON ME	GAP BAND	82	126
9	BEAT IT	MICHAEL JACKSON	83	140
10	FUNKY COLD MEDINA	TONE LOC	89	118
11	I WANNA DANCE WITH SOMEBODY	WHITNEY HOUSTON	87	120
12	PUSH IT	SALT-N-PEPA	88	130
13	RASPBERRY BERET	PRINCE	85	122
14	WILD THING	TONE LOC	89	126
15	MATERIAL GIRL	MADONNA	85	138
16	1999	PRINCE	83	120
17	GIRLS JUST WANT TO HAVE FUN	CYNDI LAUPER	84	121
18	SHE'S A BAD MAMA JAMA	CARL CARLTON	81	114
19	EVERYBODY HAVE FUN TONIGHT	WANG CHUNG	86	117
20	ALL NIGHT LONG	LIONEL RICHIE	83	110
21	APACHE (Jump On It)	SUGARHILL GANG	82	114
22	IT TAKES TWO	ROB BASE	88	112
23	LIKE A PRAYER	MADONNA	89	113
24	IT'S RAINING MEN	WEATHER GIRLS	83	138
25	ROCK WITH YOU	MICHAEL JACKSON	80	114
26	HOLIDAY	MADONNA	84	118
27	WALK THIS WAY	RUN DMC	86	106
28	CARIBBEAN QUEEN	BILLY OCEAN	84	114
29	PUMP UP THE JAM	TECHNOTRONIC	89	125
30	DANCING ON THE CEILING	LIONEL RICHIE	86	134
31	I'M SO EXCITED	POINTER SISTERS	84	183
32	CONGA	GLORIA ESTEFAN	86	124
33	WAY YOU MAKE ME FEEL	MICHAEL JACKSON	87	113
34	(I've Had) THE TIME OF MY LIFE	MEDLEY/WARNES	88	110
35	LET'S GO CRAZY	PRINCE	84	204
36	JUNGLE LOVE	TIME	85	120
37	LIKE A VIRGIN	MADONNA	84	120
38	FUNKYTOWN	LIPPS INC.	80	122
39	WANNA BE STARTING SOMETHING	MICHAEL JACKSON	83	122
40	PINK CADILLAC	NATALIE COLE	88	125

This isn't just the start of a new year, but the dawn of a new decade. It's interesting that we view so much of our culture in terms of decades rather than in mere years. For instance, I look at myself as a child of the '70s since I "grew up" during that time (although many people—including my wife—would debate this). It was during this decade that I was a teenager, graduated from high school and set out to become independent from my parents by joining the Navy. When asked what my favorite music is to listen to when I'm not performing, my reply is always "the '70s." But, as 2009 drew to a close a few months ago and a new uncharted decade was about to unfold, I ceremoniously tuned the satellite radio channel up one decade to "the '80s." It seemed that every song brought back memories from the decade where Jay Maxwell was "born."

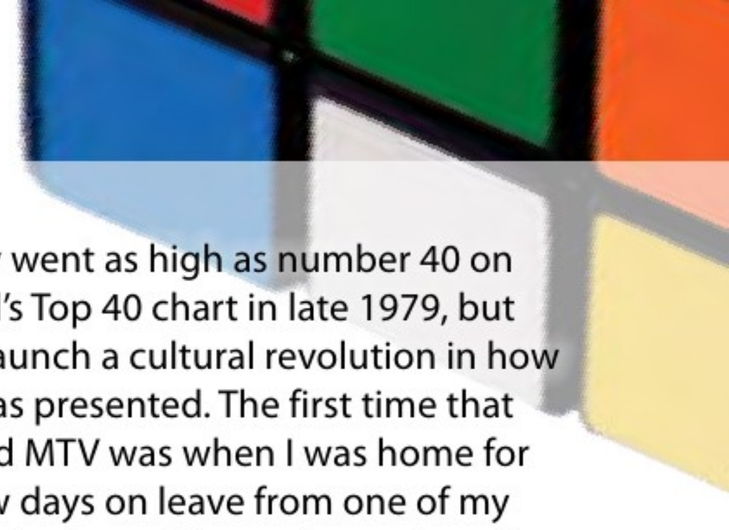
I know this may sound confusing—that I was born a decade after I grew up. It was in 1982 that I first performed as a mobile DJ and also gave it another try as a radio personality (my first try was in 1977) and that's when I "gave birth" to the DJ name of Jay Maxwell. The '80s saw a short lived career for me as a radio and club DJ, but looking back nearly 30 years, for me, the '80s was the decade that saw the beginning of a mobile DJ career that I still love.

'80S REWIND

When I changed the station to the '80s I was pleasantly surprised to hear the same disc jockeys—Mark Goodman, Alan Hunter, and Martha Quinn—that I first heard on MTV in the early '80s. One of the best bits of trivia is that MTV debuted with "Video Killed The Radio Star," a song

1980s: New Wave

	SONG	ARTIST	YEAR	BPM
1	LOVE SHACK	B-52's	89	135
2	COME ON EILEEN	DEXYS MIDNIGHT RUN	83	107
3	867-5309/JENNY	TOMMY TUTONE	82	138
4	BLISTER IN THE SUN	VIOLENT FEMMES	82	194
5	WHITE WEDDING	BILLY IDOL	83	147
6	WALKING ON SUNSHINE	KATRINA & WAVES	85	113
7	ROCK THE CASBAH	CLASH	83	129
8	KARMA CHAMELEON	CULTURE CLUB	84	182
9	WALK LIKE AN EGYPTIAN	BANGLES	86	103
10	WHIP IT	DEVO	80	160
11	IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD	REM	87	206
12	TAINTED LOVE	SOFT CELL	82	144
13	YOU SPIN ME ROUND	DEAD OR ALIVE	85	130
14	I MELT WITH YOU	MODERN ENGLISH	83	156
15	WAKE ME UP BEFORE YOU GO-GO	WHAM	84	164
16	YOUR LOVE	OUTFIELD	86	130
17	WHAT I LIKE ABOUT YOU	ROMANTICS	80	160
18	WE GOT THE BEAT	GO-GO'S	82	152
19	LET'S DANCE	DAVID BOWIE	83	115
20	TAKE ON ME	A-HA	85	169
21	HUNGRY LIKE THE WOLF	DURAN DURAN	82	129
22	SWEET DREAMS ARE MADE OF THIS	EURYTHMICS	83	125
23	SAFETY DANCE	MEN WITHOUT HATS	83	102
24	99 LUFTBALLONS	NENA	84	98
25	REBEL YELL	BILLY IDOL	84	165
26	BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE	TALKING HEADS	83	103
27	I RAN (SO FAR AWAY)	FLOCK OF SEAGULLS	82	147
28	FUNKYTOWN	PSUEDO ECHO	87	132
29	DON'T YOU (FORGET ABOUT ME)	SIMPLE MINDS	85	111
30	ROCK THIS TOWN	STRAY CATS	82	103
31	DON'T YOU WANT ME	HUMAN LEAGUE	82	113
32	OUR LIPS ARE SEALED	GO-GO'S	81	134
33	WHO CAN IT BE NOW	MEN AT WORK	82	128
34	DANCING WITH MYSELF	BILLY IDOL	83	176
35	CALL ME	BLONDIE	80	144
36	TURNING JAPANESE	VAPORS	80	180
37	SHE DRIVES ME CRAZY	FINE YOUNG CANNIBALS	89	110
38	NEED YOU TONIGHT	INXS	88	109
39	I WANT CANDY	BOW WOW WOW	82	109
40	ONCE IN A LIFETIME	TALKING HEADS	86	118

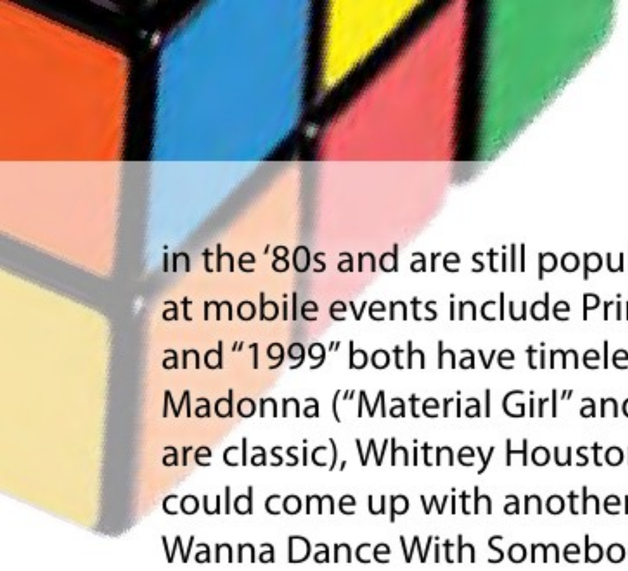


that only went as high as number 40 on Billboard's Top 40 chart in late 1979, but helped launch a cultural revolution in how music was presented. The first time that I watched MTV was when I was home for just a few days on leave from one of my first patrols aboard the nuclear submarine, John C. Calhoun. Of course, on a submarine when you are underwater, there is no television, so we missed the birth of MTV, but it seemed as though all my friends were glued to the same channel during those few days and the only thing we talked about for days once we returned to our boat was the excitement of an entire station dedicated to only showing music videos. During meals and breaks we would try and remember each video, describing it in detail in case one of us had missed a particular clip.

Based on two recent bookings, I am confident that the music from the '80s could see a huge revival in the current decade. On the day before the end of the last decade, I performed at an event where almost every song requested was from the '80s. Another recent wedding reception was booked solely on the fact that the bride wanted to ensure that I had plenty of '80s music. When a bride comes to the office for her initial consultation, we usually conduct the meeting in a room with only a couch and table. For this bride, I knew the best way to seal the deal was to "allow" her to enter the room with all the music—including an entire wall with vinyl albums. The majority of these albums were from the '80s and she was nearly speechless that she was able to hold many of her favorite albums in her hands; some she had never seen on vinyl before since she is only in her late twenties. As soon as she would ask if I had a particular LP, I was pulling it off the shelf for her. Not surprising, she booked before leaving our office.

BIG SCREEN CONNECTION

Though the typical party usually doesn't have just one decade of music requested, most every party has a fair sampling of music from 20 to 30 years ago. At nearly every party we play a song or two from the best-selling album of all time, Michael Jackson's Thriller, a masterpiece of nine songs where a remarkable total of seven were released as singles. In all, Michael had 16 top ten songs in the '80s, with exactly half of those going to number one. (Oddly enough the single "Thriller" didn't make the top spot, peaking at number four.) Other artists that ruled the charts



in the '80s and are still popular today at mobile events include Prince ("Kiss" and "1999" both have timeless beats), Madonna ("Material Girl" and "Like a Virgin" are classic), Whitney Houston (if only she could come up with another hit like "I Wanna Dance With Somebody"), Bruce Springsteen (the entire Born in the U.S.A. album rocks) and AC/DC (of course, "You Shook Me All Night Long").

One reason that many songs from the '80s have become timeless hits at parties is their inclusion on movie soundtracks that are classic in their own right. Movies such as Purple Rain, Flashdance, Urban Cowboy, Dirty Dancing, and Footloose were all in part about dancing, which helped create soundtracks that were mandatory for every DJ's collection. I'm sure we have all played "(I've Had) The Time of My Life" from Dirty Dancing to close out a show, or have lifted "Take My Breath Away" from the Top Gun soundtrack for a couple's first dance. One of my favorite soundtracks from this decade only had one dance hit on it, but I nearly wore out my original copy of the Risky Business record (thank you Tom Cruise) playing Bob Seger's "Old Time Rock & Roll."

ESSENTIAL SONGS

At first, I wanted to simply have a single Top 40 list of the best party hits of the '80s, but quickly decided that there were far too many essential hits that needed to be included. That's why I expanded the selection to include four different categories: Dance, Classic Rock, New Wave, and Slow Songs. There were other categories that could also have been included, but I incorporated all the best tracksinto these four. It's hard to imagine the handicap we would have if we were not allowed to play songs from the '80s at an event. Some songs are more popular now than when they were first released such as "Pour Some Sugar on Me" and "Don't Stop Believing." Though both the Def Leppard and Journey hits were top ten singles, I rarely played them at parties in the '80s, but play them at almost every event now. Be thankful for the '80s. Without party starters like 'Celebration" and "Love Shack" or favorites like "Super Freak," "Push It," and "It Takes Two" we would have to really use our imagination to get certain crowds out of their chairs and onto their feet as they're yelling, "Play something we can dance to!" MB

1980s: Slow Songs

	SONG	ARTIST	YEAR	BPM
1	HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY	VAN MORRISON	89	71
2	FAITHFULLY	JOURNEY	83	65
3	LADY IN RED	CHRIS DeBURGH	87	77
4	OPEN ARMS	JOURNEY	82	97
5	ANGEL EYES	JEFF HEALEY	89	63
6	TAKE MY BREATH AWAY	BERLIN	86	96
7	EVERY ROSE HAS IT'S THORN	POISON	88	71
8	YOU'RE THE INSPIRATION	CHICAGO	85	74
9	WIND BENEATH MY WINGS	BETTE MIDLER	89	62
10	SHE'S LIKE THE WIND	PATRICK SWAYZE	88	
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It Takes More than Just a Website

IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME—BUT ONLY IF YOU EXPOSE YOUR WEBSITE IN AS MANY OTHER MEDIUMS AS POSSIBLE

BY MARK JOHNSON •

Anyone can design and create an attractive website to extol the virtues of their DJ company. You can have all the flash and color, an aesthetically appealing site (as opposed to the many distracting ones), an organized site (rather than a disconnected one) and have all the right stuff in the right place. But when someone lands on your website, it is actually the period at the end of an interesting sentence.

A web page is very similar to having an 800 phone number: Anyone can have one… but how do you get the prospect to call? Back when 800 numbers were the primary contact method, you could hope that the prospective client dialed directory assistance for DJs for your area and perhaps used your name specifically. But this put a bunch of the work in the hands of the prospect, and with any minor glitches, they might be deflected from their purpose and their interest would quickly wane.

So you decided to take a more aggressive approach. Beyond the monthly expense of owning an 800 number, you had to invest additional money to put that number in front of the prospects through peripheral advertising. Just having an 800 number didn't cause the phone to ring. You had to advertise in the right places to have people retain your number and call you when the time was right. A little disconnected, but that was the state of the art back then.

Simply having a website is only just a little bit better than simply having an 800 number. Just putting up a site and taking an "If I build it, they will come" attitude, will not get you much further than simply starting up an 800 number.

INCREASING VISIBILITY

True, there were no search engines scouring the "contents" of your 800 number to cross reference when the prospects were searching for specific 800 numbers. Toll free on it's own was pretty much a hit or miss game. But to take full advantage of the new capabilities your website affords you, you must take some concrete actions.

Websites allow the inclusion of invisible words called "meta tags" to describe the site. These, along with key words in the actual content of your web pages, are what the large search engines index. Your web designer should work with you in defining these words for optimum response. A general rule is to have your meta tags, and key text segments on your pages contain specific info about your company, where you are and what you do, rather than nice but essentially meaningless adjectives like "great" or "best," etc. Your goal is to have your prospects typing in as few words as possible into the search box to come up with your site, thus saving them from having to sift through pages of results to find you.

Another thing to do is get linked to from other sites. Getting a free link on another website has value but it's not necessarily easy to do. Some of the DJ associations will allow their members to have links to their sites. But again, how does the general public land on those association web sites to then click to get to yours. An important way to get cross-linked is to make connections with other wedding vendors and exchanging links with them.

PROACTIVE PROMOTION

So far, you've not spent any extra money beyond the monthly or yearly fees for typical web hosting. But you still can't simply sit on your hands and hope that the business comes to you. You have to bring your business to the people.

One possibility is Google's "sponsored links" but given my experiences with clients at my "day job" it is typically more trouble than it's worth. In a nutshell, you set a maximum amount per month to pay for showing up as a sponsored link for searches using certain keywords and if someone follows that link to your site. Sounds good, but given the words used, you could use up your monthly allowance by the third of the month with tons of false-positives. If you choose the keyword "DJ," then zillions of unrelated views might occur, offering your link to unrelated prospects. Some words are too general to specifically help, while other words are too tricky to remember.

One convenient element about DJs using the internet is that we typically do not cater to a geographical area covering more than a 10 to 20-mile radius from where we are located. I know that we all have done far away DJ events, but practically speaking, our business territory is pretty much defined by a nominal radius. (If you're in a metropolitan area, the miles may be lower due to higher population density than if you're in the middle of less populated suburban or rural area.)

So, this means that you can reach your intended audience of prospects with other targeted advertising methods, all pointing back to your website. The ads aim to gain attention and send interested prospects directly to your site for further info and the opportunity to book an event—totally bypassing the search en-



gine dilemma. I've used local coupon mailers in the past and they do cause qualified visitors to my website. These methods are very geographically defined so you can pinpoint your message better.

Here, however, is where you have to make some kind of monetary investment. Unless you are sending to schools, churches or other defined organizations, direct mail is incredibly expensive if you do it yourself. Mailers charges $400 for 10,000 addresses and it would cost roughly $5,900 to mail them yourself (providing you had all those addresses). I, for one, don't want to lick 10,000 stamps and envelopes.

BLAST 'EM

But paper-based advertising seems a bit counterintuitive in a discussion of websites, doesn't it? The paperless alternative to direct mail is an email blast: hiring an outside company to take your email message and send it to thousands of email addresses. I did some homework in my area and found a company that had 25,000 email addresses within a 10-mile radius of my home zip code. I could purchase this list for $99 and use it as many times as I like.

Now you could not simply paste these 25,000 email addresses into the "TO:" box on an email, as your internet service provider (ISP) would reject them as spam. All ISPs have fine print that prohibits bulk emailing. But you could engage with companies specifically set up for email blasts; their charges are incredibly reasonable.

So I put together a rather brief message with a link to my actual web site and spent $99 for the list and $60 for the blast. Thus I hit 25,000 emails for $160 which is a whole lot cheaper than direct mail.

You can assume that a small fraction of the emails are not in use, another larger fraction may have spam filters that block your message, and another not-so-small fraction will simply not be read at all. But just like with direct mail, it's a number's game. If only 1% actually get read and clicked through, then that's just $0.65 per interested visitor to your site.

Web-based search engines are very likely to connect your site with info-seekers three time zones away. For someone in your area to find you through that kind of search would require the prospect to fine-tune their typing just to eventually get to your site. A better approach is that we should do the work and not hope that the prospect can figure it all out.

As they say "All roads lead towards Rome" but someone had to travel a lot to stick those signs in the ground. The same is true for our advertising. We have to spend a lot of time and money to get the prospects to call or click. Then, the ball is in our court. MB

Making the List

One interesting (albeit somewhat crowded) free classified advertising opportunity is Craig's List. (CL). There, the prospect would go to www.craigslist.org, then choose their own geographical area, category (services) and subcategory (events)—and in the process do 90% of the work for us. Then you have to hope that the prospect likes your classified ad's heading line (shown in the search) and clicks on your link. There you could place a small blurb in the CL listing and, most importantly, post a link to your website where the actual business takes place.

"Free" does have its price though. You would not expect someone to type more than "DJ" as the search word, so there's not much chance to distinguish your ad from any other DJ's ad. Also, CL shows the replies in reverse date order and from there in no real order. CL allows your ad to exist for 30 or more days, so it could slip further and further down the list. You may wish to monitor the placement of your listing relative to other DJ ads and delete and re-post. CL will cause a 2-day quarantine on re-posting simply to move your listing to the top. A little troublesome but given the price, it may be worth it.

CL also prohibits the same subject in different geographical areas, which I think is somewhat limiting. Again, free is free and they're in charge. You could vary the subject slightly and have an additional CL listing of the same content.

Association Reflections

A NEW LOCAL PRESIDENT SHARES HIS EXPERIENCE SO FAR

BY MIKE "DR. FRANKENSTAND" RYAN •

...Did you hear about the letter to all of the Mobile DJs in San Diego? The DJ association president thinks we should join their chapter. Why? It's nothing but a "good 'ole boys club!" –Anonymous

This statement couldn't be further from the truth. That's like calling a DJ "just a record player." Let me try to convince you. Recently, I received an e-mail asking me about starting a DJ association. Great timing, because I had just been elected president of our local ADJA Chapter.

The following are some experiences I've had so far in running an association, including some of the pitfalls to avoid. I am by no means an expert, just someone who has served on many boards, including two terms as a town councilman.

WHAT KIND OF ASSOCIATION?

You have to determine if you want an independent association or one affiliated with a national association, such as the ADJA or NAME. Being part of a national association certainly has many benefits. One is that it's like operating a franchise: Everything you need is already spelled out for you. It's a fairly easy turn-key operation. And like a union, there is power in numbers. Plus, legitimate DJ associations typically have excellent benefits.

WHEN AND WHERE TO MEET

Meeting places, meeting days and times: You can't please everyone, so why even try? However, if (as in my chapter's case) the whole board can only meet on a certain day then that's when you hold your meetings. It's important to have your whole board present for your meetings.

RUNNING A MEETING

Over time, I've seen two ways association meetings can be run: a casual gathering, more like a "boy's night out;" or a business-like operation that follows Robert's Rules of Order, the standard method of conducting meetings. Using Robert's Rules may sound complicated but it's not. However, you do need to have at least a rudimentary understanding of those rules.

Warning: Sometimes you do have to put on "mental doggie poop bags" to handle some of the "stuff" you are bound to encounter with any group of individuals, especially people with strong personalities and egos...like DJs! However, if you're lucky and surround yourself with good people who doggedly dedicate their time to the chapter, then it's a whole lot easier.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

There are many avenues available to garner free publicity for your association. If you keep up with current events I promise you that at some point an incident (news story) will happen that you can latch onto for publicity. For instance, in 2007 NBC Radio talk show host Don Imus' made on-air racial slurs against the Rutgers Women's Basketball Team. I seized this opportunity to hold a press conference featuring both of our local DJ associations condemning music with negative racial overtones and or songs celebrating violence and foul language. This press conference was covered by several local TV stations and the local newspaper. It was great PR for us.

JUST SAY NO TO INFOMERCIALS

The single most important part of any association, group, or even a card game is its membership! Without members you don't have an association.

One of the first pitfalls I've encountered in recruiting new members is that some seasoned DJs complain about what they call "infomercial guest speakers." I understand that people have to make a living but sometimes we're bombarded with so many sales pitches we reach a breaking point. I've made it a goal to include speakers who can actually hire us and or suggest ways to make more money.

An example of a non-infomercial guest speaker would be our last guest speaker a Jewish Rabbi who not only educated us about Jewish weddings, and bat and bar mitzvahs, but also suggested great ways to up- sell certain kinds of events.

Other examples from around the country: The ADJA's Phoenix, AZ. chapter recently held a minister's roundtable, a NACE roundtable and a discussion on music programming. The Denver ADJA chapter featured a program on improv and comedy skills and another one on making wedding receptions better. The ADJA chapter in Charlotte, North Carolina had a guest speaker talk about school events and bridal fairs. And The San Diego DJ Association has an annual newlyweds round table.

GET IT TOGETHER

Although it may have once been accurate to call a DJ association a "good 'ole boys club," this stereotype just isn't relevant anymore. Who has the time to waste on that kind of thing anyway? Real DJ associations are there for the membership—for you. Joining an association is your chance to gain valuable information, connections with your peers and fellow professionals beyond the DJ world, and also to "share the wealth" of your own experience.

Running an Association Chapter: People Power

PRESIDENT

I see the president's role as that of a facilitator in all respects of the operation of the chapter and as the chapter's spokesperson. Other duties include:

- Keeping track of association activities
- Coordination with other officers
- Communicating association positions as appropriate
 Reviewing and responding to incoming messages, or delegating this to another officer
- Helping set annual goals for the association

Personal note: I asked the vice president for a favor once and he responded with "Yes boss." It is my opinion that the association president is NOT the boss! He or she is like an elder statesman, experienced in the operation of a group or association. Democracy works great with volunteer boards—the alternative isn't pretty.

VICE PRESIDENT

This is like a junior varsity player who is, in a sense, training to step in if the president can't attend a meeting. Usually the V.P. is next in line to become president should he or she desire to move up. Other duties include:

- Assisting the president to set and meet annual goals
- Working with the president on events and project coordination
- Serving as the contact person when the president is not available
- If knowledgeable, becoming the chapter's webmaster

TREASURER

Here's a great description I've found: "The Treasurer's role is the most important function on the board, after that of the chair. Financial accountability is of the utmost importance to non-profit associations. If your funders lose faith in your ability to control and account for finances, they lose faith in the whole organization" (from the Dawn Ontario Disabled Women's Network [DODWN]).

Always remember that the slightest hint of impropriety is often worse than the impropriety itself! When it comes to money, "Cover Thy A**!" A treasurer's duties include:

- Maintaining the chapter's bank account
- Keeping a record of members and dues paid
 Keeping the association's financial records straight
- Reporting the status of the association's finances at meetings (i.e. the Treasurer's Report).

SECRETARY

Here's another great quote from the DODWN: "'I can't be secretary. I'm no good at taking minutes.' This is probably one of the most popular refrains heard at the time of year when the nominating committee is putting together its slate for the next board. It's accompanied by visions of hours upon hours of furious writing during meetings, followed by more hours of laboriously copying and proofing the minutes—the official record of a meeting's proceedings. All this stems from a misunderstanding of the purpose for which minutes are used. The secretary's main duty is to record meeting decisions along with insight about the decisions. This is done by taking meeting notes, preparing the minutes, and sending them out to members, including those who couldn't be there.

It is NOT necessary to:

- Record everything
- Attach a speaker's name to everything that is said
- List every reason for and against a decision

When you are approached to serve as a board member, there are a few things to consider as you decide to do it or not. First, the organization needs dedicated board members to keep it running smoothly and growing. Although it will be a time commitment, it will also be rewarding to see your impact on the association, working alongside your fellow board members. Remember that there is always an end to your term. And, last but not least, board memberships always look good on your resume or "about us" page on your website! MB



Mike Ryan started out writing for news radio, and has been a SoCal DJ on KGB and KSDS. He mobiles as Mike on the Mike. He is also the inventor/owner of Frankenstand Powered Speaker Stands. He is currently the president of the San Diego Chapter of the ADJA.

Got Gear?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

"rock this house" sound system served well. LPs, CDs, cassettes, MDs, and DAT have all offered reliable means of audio play.

Now, silicon-based ones and zeros rule the day. CD players are giving way to MP3 players, cases of discs to flash drives. And, soon, the reply "Sorry, I do not have that song" will fade away in the "cloud" of wifi and the internet.

Are lights, video screens, and direct audience input (rather than audience involvement) now the equipment base standard? Has gear re-emerged as a sales differentiator after years of nominal import?

As we amuse ourselves in this age of narcissistic enablers such as Facebook, Twitter and phone cameras, do clients and guests seek a director—instead of a well-rounded entertainer—to support their often unstated goal to star in their own reality show?

Will the ability to effectively tell a story be the new education focus? All questions that beg answers that are just beginning to take shape.

PROPER PERSPECTIVE

This discourse is by no means intended to devalue gear. Rather, the purpose is to frame a perspective about gear in relation to the evolving contemporary goals of the event and an entertainer's contribution to their achievement.

Gear is a means to an end, not the end in itself. Gear is the support staff that facilitates the achievement of the goals of most events, and a critical component of that pursuit. Gear is the trusted companion, the reliable, always-ready pack mule of your journey.

Gear should be able to weather the constant challenge of transport. Housing gear in protective containers will extend the life of the gear and support an attractive appearance. Yeah, you might invest a little more time at each event, but the mobile business does not treat sensitive equipment kindly.

But most importantly, gear should be responsive to the specific needs of the entertainer. If you teach dance, do you wish to employ a remote to start selections from the floor? Can you

The medium is the message
Marshall McLuhan

quickly access drops and sound bytes to supplement raffles, giveaways, comic bits and more? Will your system support multiple microphone connections, if needed? Will your system support discretion and control over video input? Will your system support social media input/output? Don't yield to the temptation to acquire the latest and greatest just because you've been wowed. Think through carefully how new technology can enable or enhance your real goal of serving the client and audience with event-appropriate entertainment.

FINAL CALL

If all your key equipment is functioning well, the stage is now set for your talent to allow the event to shine.

So, yes, gear is the Camaro, the cherry, the necklace. But, gear is only as good as the entertainer—or director—pushing the buttons. Work hard (slave away?) to master your equipment. But, more critically, be a slave to the rhythm of your guests' entertainment satisfaction. MB

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

show's host and producer, Jose Heredia, knows the struggles DJs find themselves in and is committed to bringing them information that will boost their morale as well as their bank accounts.

"Jose Heredia came to me with this idea of taking his popular video series even further and I was thrilled with it," says Mobile Beat's Ryan Burger. "We will lend assistance to DJs whenever we can, especially when they are helping the community of DJs through extra efforts like the Crossfader Show."

Find out more at MobileBeat.Com and DJSatisfaction.Com.

SENIOR DJ SHAKES UP CLUB SCENE

You may have seen her recently on national news broadcasts or on the internet. She's living proof that time doesn't have to stop you from rockin' the decks. According to her website, "Ruth Flowers, 69-year-old, is the matriarch and the hippest English deejay of our time!"

Nice and eccentric, strong and full of energy, Ruth likes to have fun and to bring everyone along in her wake. While preparing the launch of her electro-rock EP MamyRock, she is performing at the most famous nightclubs all over the world.

"I have had a very lively youth," says the lady DJ, "I used to go to balls all the time, I loved to dance, but then came the old age, pension, but above all, boredom…I started looking for something more…

"One night, my grandson, who I'm very close to, celebrated his birthday in a nightclub in London. And he told me that I could join them. When I arrived, the bouncers didn't let me go inside. It is true that I didn't really match their usual clients (laughs)… I finely managed to enter and I was dumbfound. There was such an atmosphere! It was so different from the parties I used to go to when I was young. There was a real osmosis between the lights and the music; it really drove me! It made me feel so much younger!"



Ruth continues: "This night shattered my view of things but above all the way I saw my life…I had a lot of free time, I was on pension you know… I talked to my grandson about it and he thought I went mad. Then he introduced me to a friend of his, a young French director and producer. We got along from the very beginning and he, with the help of his team, offered to help me becoming a DJ, working on a track, building an image etc… It was really fun! Now I think that I'm ready to make everybody move their ass on the dancefloor (laughs).

And the spunky DJ's final word? "Indeed, I'd rather sign a contract with a record company than to sign up for the nursing home!" Check her out at www.mamyrock.com. MB

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Not Enough Time?!

BY GRAHAM SILVER •

Two weeks ago, as of this writing, I fell down the stairs and broke my back as I tried to stop my two-year-old daughter from tumbling down head first towards our tile floor. I was able to break her fall and she is perfectly fine. I, however, have been constrained to a back brace for the next three months. I am a very lucky individual, as I did not need surgery and have full use of all my faculties.

However, as a mobile DJ, the word "mobile" is a key part of my business. Not only does it give me the ability to perform at any given venue, but also the ability to meet my clients where they feel comfortable. It also gives me the freedom to move around a room at the reception to make sure everything is in place. But what I want to focus on here is some of the insights my current circumstances have given me—as I would not consider myself entirely mobile at this time.

For the next 3 months of my life cannot drive. I can't pick up anything heavy, meet any prospective clients, perform at an event, teach the cha cha slide at a bar mitzvah, set up and break down my system, or stand for more than 20 minutes without some discomfort. I can't sit for more than 45 min without some pain. So I ask myself, am I currently considered a "mobile DJ"? And the answer is still YES.

So what can I do? My accident has given me a new perspective on my life, on my goals and on my career. I have been a mobile DJ for over 16 years as a single operator and was always afraid to take the risk of growing my company, not because I didn't know how, (I could always research that), but out of fear that I might not succeed...and that I just don't have the time.

The accident has given me something more than just time to think (and, believe me, I have a lot of that). Just because I am unable to leave the house for three months, I am starting to realize that, being self employed, I worked out of my house anyway. So what's the difference? Why do I now find more time to be productive just because I have an excuse? Is it because I don't have a choice, or does that mean that I just chose not to use my time to its full potential when I had the freedom to do so?

For the last two weeks I have done more for my business than I have in years. I have found another DJ who will be assisting me when I fulfill the rest of my events after I am healed. I have started to form an S corporation for my company. I have put together a subcontractor agreement for the talent I now need to hire. I have learned more about the traditions and myths weddings. I realized that I know nothing about the history of an industry that I choose to be a part of. How great to be able to tell a bride the reason why the bridal party all dress alike. Or where the term "honeymoon" came from and its true meaning. All of us at some point do a Honeymoon Dance. Why not take the opportunity to inform the guests and add some flavor to what can sometimes become pretty mundane.

I am only two weeks into my recovery, with two-and-a-half months left. What am I going to do? One things is, I am going to focus my attention on my presentation as an MC. As a DJ, I already know how to play the music that will get the guests on the dance floor. But as an MC, it is my job—my duty, my obligation—to help create a mood and emotion in the room that will add more to any event than just music. Last year, I heard Jim Cerone at the mobile beat show speak about being "The Perfect Host" and he said something that truly stuck with me: that thirty percent of the reception is music the other seventy percent is creating the memories. The word MC means Master of Ceremonies. I am nowhere near being a Master. I'm very lucky to have been born in England and still have a glimpse of an accent that some brides seem to admire, but a Master of Ceremonies? Not sure about that!

Last night, I spent over two hours on YouTube looking at openings from the Oscars to the Emmys to talk shows to see what the hosts of these shows have as far as stage presence. It occurred to me that they have what I have. A voice to talk, legs to stand up on in front of a crowd, hands to make gestures, and a script. Isn't that what we have after we meet with our couples? They have mastered their skills over time and that's exactly what I have a lot of right now: TIME.

That word seems so misused. What does one mean when they say they don't have enough time? Is there a time clock with a ticker counting down somewhere that I am not aware of? Five seconds—that's all it took to change my world. Five minutes—the amount of time it took for the ambulance to arrive and take me to the hospital. 30 seconds equals the time it takes for me to stand next to the microwave and heat up a hot dog for my child. One minute seems long during a commercial I have to sit through while watching a show online that I can't edit with my TiVo.

Then there's the 15 seconds I have to pick up my phone and introduce my company to a prospect when it rings. I have lost count of the times I let a call go to voicemail because I "didn't have the time" to talk. Sometimes I never even got a voice message. How many clients have I lost because it wasn't a good time to talk? I could easily have said that I'm on the other line and would love the opportunity to speak with them shortly. It's time to stop making excuses that I don't have enough time to grow my business, to take it to the next level, to understand why it is I choose to leave my family on a Saturday night and spend it with other people.

As a DJ I have enjoyed music. I didn't realize I had to be a salesman, a motivator, a speaker, an accountant, a traveler, a technician, a roadie and more. I just wanted to play music and have fun. But if I'm going to be more than just a DJ, you had better believe that I am going to take the time to be the best entertainer and Master of Ceremonies that I can be. John Lennon once said. "Life is what happens to you when you're too busy making other plans". I say time is what we have plenty of. To keep moving forward, it's time we choose not to do anything at all that keeps us standing still. MB

Graham Silver owns Silvertunes Entertainment (www.silvertunes.com), serving Southern California.

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